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TOWER OF SAN JERONE
OLD HAVANA

W. S. W.

A VOYAGE IN THAT DIRECTION TO THE WEST INDIES.

BY

ROBERT ELWES, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF "A SKETCHER'S TOUR ROUND THE WORLD."

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

From Original Drawings by the Author.

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PREFACE.

THERE have been numerous books already written about the West Indies, but they are chiefly either statistical works, or adventures of naval officers; and although a voyage to those islands is a most agreeable trip for the winter months, but few people undertake it for pleasure. When I wished to go there, I could find no book, with the exception of A. Trollope's amusing work, that could give me any information on the subject. People usually profess to have a dislike to Guide-books, but in many countries I have often found the want of them; and unless a traveller studies and "reads up" a country before he goes there, he must often be liable to pass by objects worthy of notice without knowing it till afterwards.

I found many things in the West Indies so utterly different from what I expected, that I need hardly apologise for writing this short volume; and if it be found useful to those about to visit these beautiful possessions of the British Crown, my trouble will be amply repaid.

The lithographs have been done entirely by myself, and I hope they will give some idea of the beauty of the scenery.

R. E.

Congham House, Norfolk.

1865.

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W. S. W.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from England.—The *Shannon*.—A Gale of wind.—Island of Sombrero.—St. Thomas.—Description of the Town.

VOYAGES in steamers are generally all alike. The passengers at first think that they are going to have a very quick run, and that everything must go on prosperously. Then the weather changes, and they imagine that they never will arrive at their destination; and they usually finish by considering that they have had a tolerable passage, and have been rather fortunate to get it. So it will suffice to say that I and my wife sailed from Southampton, on Tuesday, the 17th of January, 1865; in the Royal Mail Company's steamship *Shannon*, 3,472 tons, Captain Woolley, Commander. We were bound for the West Indies, and had taken a return ticket for Colon,—or as it is generally called, Aspinwall,—the terminus on the Atlantic side of the Panama railway. We had leave to stop and break our voyage at any

islands we liked, and might return from Havana instead of Colon, if by chance we went to Cuba.

On leaving home we meant to remain abroad for three months, principally to avoid the cold of an English spring, and had no particular plan as to where to go or where to stay ; but intended to cross the Isthmus of Panama to the Pacific side, and perhaps go on to Mexico.

The *Shannon* was a splendid iron ship, and for some days we had fine weather ; but off the Azores we picked up the gale (W.N.W.) which seems to be always blowing there, and now for three days our vessel's powers were put to the test. It was a wonderful thing to see how the great Atlantic billows tossed this huge vessel about. Sometimes they threw her bows right into the air, so that her forefoot must have been visible. Then she dived into it with her wedge-like bows, taking in green seas over everything ; and the lady passengers were rather startled to hear one of the officers affirm that the fore part of the vessel had been under water for thirty-six hours. However, under the able management of her captain and excellent chief officer, we weathered the gale in safety, without the loss of a spar, or anything else, and soon ran into warmer weather, and smoother water.

On Feb. 1 we made a fine run of 312 miles,

and sighted the island of Sombrero, the first land we had seen. This wretched little island, about a mile long, looked utterly barren and worthless; and its black cliffs, about thirty feet high, are continually beaten by the long swell of the Atlantic; but it has its value, for it has been lately discovered to be principally composed of a hard sort of guano, and that is now worked, and several low houses are built on it for the accommodation of people thus employed. In the evening, we were off the entrance of the harbour of St. Thomas, but did not enter till the next morning.*

St. Thomas is a Danish island, and nearly a free port, and has been chosen, for the goodness of its harbour and the convenience of its situation, as the chief depôt of the Mail Steamship Company; and to it all the Transatlantic steamers run, and there transfer their passengers and freight to smaller vessels. These smaller ones run on different routes. One branch goes to

* I here give the log of the *Shannon*:—

	Miles.		Miles.
January 18	181	January 26	206
,, 19	242	,, 27	261
,, 20	253	,, 28	278
,, 21	211	,, 29	278
,, 22	169	,, 30	275
,, 23	170	,, 31	301
,, 24	172	February 1	312
,, 25	172		

Vera Cruz, Mexico, touching at Havana,—this is called the Gulf-boat. A second to Hayti, Jamaica, and Colon ; this takes all passengers and freight for Vancouver's Island, the north-west coast of America, and South America, viz., Peru and Chili. A third runs to the Windward Islands, as far as Barbadoes, where it again branches,—one going to Demerara, the other to Trinidad and Tobago ; and a fourth takes the Bahama route. Besides these, a steamer runs to Cumana, and another to New York ; but these belong to other companies. The Liverpool screw line also touches at St. Thomas. So that it may be perceived that this little island, of twelve miles long, has become one of the most important of the West Indian group.

In the morning the *Shannon* went into the harbour, and immediately the *Derwent*, for the Windward Islands, and the *Solent*, for the Isthmus, sheered up on either side, and a gangway being placed to each, the work of trans-shipment immediately commenced. The *Derwent* was to sail at 9 A.M., so her passengers had but little time. We in the *Solent* were to leave at 4 P.M. So having seen our new cabin and put our baggage on board, we went on shore to visit the Consul, and to see the town. This we found clean and flourishing ; but I have no idea what the name of it is, for it seems to be never used.

The town has good streets and shops; but as all passengers have to go there, and often to wait some days, it is particularly disliked by every one. It is, moreover, often visited by yellow fever, which may arise from the number of foreign shipping congregated there, and from the great heat of the climate, for, as it faces the south, when there is no wind it becomes like an oven. The sickness probably is increased by the stagnant state of the harbour, which is nearly landlocked; and the rise of the tide is so small (not being more than eighteen inches or two feet), that the water does not get often changed. Lately they have cut a small channel from the inner corner of the harbour to an adjacent bay, and that gives a little more current, and it is said that the health of the place is already improved.

The black population speak English (as does, indeed, everyone else), and are most amusing; the women dressing in the very height of fashion. The island produces nothing, the people being able to earn more about the streets and in the harbour, than they could obtain from field labour; formerly it was cultivated, and used to send home a certain quantity of sugar.

St. Croix is another Danish island, about twenty miles off. It is all under cultivation, and from accounts it is not a bad place to stay at, having an hotel and good roads. A small steamer runs

there, and it is a good deal resorted to by invalids.

The town at St. Thomas consists chiefly of one long street, but it also runs up the shoulders of three hills, somewhat like Valparaiso; and the houses being bright, painted yellow and pink with red roofs, it has a cheerful and *riant* appearance. The hills behind rise rather steeply, and numerous villas are scattered about the lower parts of them, the pink house of the Governor being conspicuous above all. We landed at a small pier, and found ourselves in an avenue of cocoa-nut trees, under which numbers of negresses were selling fruit, oranges, bananas, sugar-cane, etc.; but most of these commodities were brought from other islands. There is another fruit market, also shaded with trees, in the other part of the town. A fort, painted pink and white, with the Danish flag flying, commanded the east side of the town, and below is a small public garden, where the band plays twice a week. The stores supply every sort of English, French, and German goods, but the chief trade seems to be in cigars, Panama hats, and light clothing; the price of good cigars was £1 per hundred.

One great object that I had in St. Thomas, was to find out all I could about Mexico, whether it would be feasible to land at Acapulco, and from there ride up to the capital, and return by Vera

ST THOMAS .

Cruz. I therefore called on the Mexican Consul; but he told me at once that he knew nothing, that he had never been there, and could give no information. I was referred from one person to another, and at last to an American merchant, who was very civil, as I have always found Americans in a foreign country. He showed me a handbook of the Panama railway, where Acapulco and the neighbouring country was described, but he could not tell me much about the present state of affairs. He said that it was in a disturbed state, and advised me not to attempt it, and I could learn no more than that in St. Thomas. However, we determined to go as far as Panama, have a look at the Pacific, and then, if the Mexican route was difficult, to return.

CHAPTER II.

Leave St. Thomas.—St. Domingo.—Jacmel.—Jamaica.—Port Royal.—Land at Kingston.—State of the Streets.—Shops.

And so we left St. Thomas, on the second of February, in the *Solent*, 1,400 tons, for Jamaica and Aspinwall. We ran along in sight of the pretty looking island of Porto Rico, but did not touch there. It is still in the possession of Spain, and is rather a large island, being ninety-three miles long, and eighty-three wide. It is fertile, and supplies most of the neighbouring islands with beef. We had a detachment of a West Indian regiment on board, bound for Honduras. They fancied that they had some grievance about provisions or rum, or something of that sort, and at last one or two of them broke out in open mutiny, —one, indeed, rushing about with a knife,—but he was soon seized and overpowered by the crew and passengers, and finished his voyage in irons. At daylight the next morning, we found ourselves in sight of the mountainous coast of Hayti, or St. Domingo. It is a very large island, being 380 miles in length, rugged and mountainous, the

highest peak rising to the altitude of 7,450 feet.

Formerly the island was owned half by the French and half by the Spaniards, but now the French have entirely given up their part. Having had several revolutions, and been governed by the Emperors Faustin and Soulouque, it is now a black republic. Lately there has been some severe fighting between the blacks and the Spaniards, who still hold a part, but I believe the latter are now on the point of giving it up entirely. The country being very mountainous, and covered with wood, the negroes have a great advantage; and the climate being excessively unhealthy, it was found impossible for the Spaniards to keep their troops there.

After coasting along for some way, we entered the bay in which is situated the town of Jacmel. Here the mail-boat went on shore, and another followed. Some of the passengers went on shore for a few minutes; but landing is often very difficult, a heavy surf rolling in from the ocean. Sentries were on the pier and in different parts of the town, some with shoes, some with coats, some without, and generally they were quite willing, for a quarter of a dollar, to put down their muskets and go an errand. The boats soon returned, bringing plenty of pine-apples, and other fruits, and we then proceeded on our voyage.

February 4.—The distance from St. Thomas's to Jacmel was 470 miles, and hence to Kingston 255; but at daylight we found ourselves a few miles off the southern coast of Jamaica, and we ran all day along in full view of the island. It appeared to be a succession of hills, with higher mountains behind them; and as we got nearer we could see the thick forests, and below them the cultivated land, bright green, with fields of sugar-cane and here and there the houses, the steam-engines with the tall chimneys, and the sheds used for different purposes in the manufacture of sugar. We gazed at all these most anxiously, as we coasted along, wondering which parts we should visit and how we should get there; but most persons gave us very discouraging accounts of the travelling in the island, saying there were no inns, but that we must go up to people's houses, and depend on their hospitality; that there were no horses to be hired, and if we wanted any, we should have to buy a pair; "but don't you know people on the island," etc., etc.

Late in the afternoon we rounded the flat low point of Port Royal and picked up a black pilot, who was to take us up to Kingston. Port Royal is situated at the end of a long sandy spit called the Palisades, which entirely defends the harbour of Kingston from the sea. It was formerly a row of islets, but to protect the country

from the attacks of the buccaneers the Spaniards filled up the openings between them with posts, and since that the sand has silted them up entirely, and it is now a continuous spit of land, and hence got its name of the Palisades.

Port Royal, famous for yellow fever, sharks and landcrabs, is built at the end of this spit, where it becomes broader, and here lie the men-of-war and here are the commissariat stores, barracks, etc. Formerly, old Port Royal stood further out, but it was entirely submerged by an earthquake in 1692, and now there is deep water close to the point. We were boarded by the men-of-war's boats for the mails, the frigates *Shannon* and *Rosario* lying there. It was doubtful at first whether we should proceed up to Kingston that night. However, we sent out boats with lanthorns to the principal buoys, and feeling our way carefully with the lead going, we arrived safely at the wharf at Kingston.

Colonel Nelson, who had come out with us, and I, immediately went on shore, guided by an old resident, who was to show us the best boarding-house in the town, to which we were to go on our return from Panama. This old resident had been sent, on some government service, to report on the Island of Sombrero, and as he had lived for a long time in Jamaica, we tried to get all the information we could from him; but

although he praised to the utmost everything in the island, he did not give us, as travellers, much encouragement; and as for our trip to Mexico, he did nothing but shake his head at the thought of it. I fancied all the time that I had seen him before, and kept thinking where I could have heard his melancholy voice. Australia and the South Seas he had been in, Chili, Peru, and many other places where I had been. At last, he showed me some sketches, and then I thought that I recognised the stiff style; and on further questioning, I found that we had been in Lima at the same time; and then I remembered that I, with Mr. Pitt Adams (who was then minister there), had looked over his portfolio, and that this old fellow, who was now shaking his head about our intended trip to Mexico, had actually persuaded me not to go there, when I was in Lima fourteen years before. With this gentleman, then, we passed through the company's coal wharf, where cocoa-nut and date trees overshadow huge mountains of coal, and went into the streets. But, oh! what streets, and what a town! It was moonlight, and though this softened down everything, it could not conceal the desolation and ruinous look of these streets. They were unpaved and nearly ankle-deep in dust; no footway, except in some of the streets near the harbour, where there was often a disjointed piece in front of a house, and

this piece usually finished a foot above or below the next one. This made it still more dangerous, as the town was utterly unlighted.

Before each house were steps, and on each side of the steps heaps of earth and rubbish, so that the only safe place whereon to walk was the middle of the street. Then the houses all seemed to be in the last stage of decay. Railings in front with brick pillars tumbling down; doors gone, or hanging by one hinge; windows patched with boards; roofs falling in, in fact, in every form of unpicturesque ruin. If one house was in tolerable repair, the next would very likely be railed in more like an English pigstye than anything else. Each house had brick steps, but the last step was always twice as high as it ought to have been, for the road seemed to have been washed away from it; and that was probably the case, as the streets became large muddy water-courses in the rainy season, and are then difficult to cross. Canoes are sometimes paddled up them, and I know a gentleman who, having to dine with another at the other side of the street, took off his shoes and stockings to walk across, putting them on again when safe on the other side.

The houses could never have been good. I did not see a piece of cut stone in the whole town, and the brickwork looked as if all the mortar had been picked out of it.

We walked through the dust up Duke Street, and at last stopped at one of these houses, better looking, perhaps, than most of the others, but still we did not guess why we stopped there, till our friend rang the bell and told us that this was the boarding-house where we were to stay. Having ascended the dangerous steps we found it much better than its outside appearance led us to suppose. There were really good rooms, with a verandah and polished oak floor. Nice bedrooms, altogether comfortable, and as good as any place possibly could be in Kingston. It was nicely furnished; but curiously enough the first thing that caught my eye in one of the rooms was a print of Castleacre, a ruin near my own house.

We arranged that we should stay at this house on our return from Panama, and then went on to one of the hotels (Barkly House) to order breakfast for the morrow,—thinking we could get a better breakfast on shore than on board the steamer. Indeed, we then had visions of fresh flying-fish, landcrabs, and all sorts of West Indian delicacies; but we found our mistake in the morning, for we had to breakfast on bad coffee, ridiculously tough beefsteak, and fried bacon. And this was Kingston, and here on our return we were to stop a fortnight, and my friend the Colonel for five years!

To our surprise the next morning was rainy.

The ship was coaling, and at daybreak, with the rising sun, it was a busy and picturesque scene. The coal was all carried up on black women's heads. After I had had a delightful bath on shore at the Company's wharf, we went to breakfast, and then walked about the town to buy a few things we wanted.

The shops were tolerably good, especially the drapers, and were full of everything that could be wanted. Full, too, of customers, principally coloured ladies, and they seemed to drive a flourishing trade ; but business seemed mostly to be in the hands of the children of Israel, and Lazarus, Moses, and Levy were the commonest names. The town looked no better by daylight, in fact, in some things rather worse, and put one most in mind of Monte Video as I saw it once during the siege. And this, as already said, was Kingston, the chief town of our most important West Indian Island,—Kingston, which was formerly so rich that every planter lived like a prince, and kept open house for everyone. But I saw no signs that it had ever been rich ; no large houses, even in ruins ; no remains of grandeur. The only solid looking things were the aforesaid brick steps to the houses. In Spanish towns, however bygone, we generally see some remains of prosperity —well built church towers, handsome façades of

convents, arches, or fortifications; but here was nothing, and if Kingston were shaken down by an earthquake, a few heaps of bricks would be the only remains to mark the spot.

CHAPTER III.

Leave Jamaica.—Aspinwall, or Colon.—Dangerous Landing.—New Church.

Jamaica to Colon, 550 miles; time allowed two days and eight hours. The *Solent* sailed at twelve noon, February 6, and was so punctual that we nearly left three of our passengers behind us. They had been out for a drive, and had not been correctly told the hour of sailing; nor had they heard the gun fired an hour before starting. The hawser getting foul of a buoy, delayed us for a short time after we had left the wharf; so they came off in a shore boat in a great fright, and saved their passage. We had a fair wind across the Caribbean sea, and anchored off Colon at 10 p.m. February 8.

This place, situated on the Isthmus of Panama, is generally called Aspinwall by everybody except the English. The original appellation was Colon, so named in honour of Columbus (for that is his proper name in Italian and Spanish); but the Americans having built the town themselves, called it Aspinwall, after their great capitalist. The port for this side of the isthmus was originally

Porto Bello, well known in the times of the buccaneers. Aspinwall is a poor place, consisting of one street; but there are two or three hotels quite as good as one could expect here, and several merchants' houses. The railway runs right along the middle of the street into a great shed at the end of the pier, and the whole place looks much like a large station.

Colon is situated on a small island called Manzanilla, on the eastern coast of Navy Bay, formerly nothing but a mangrove swamp, swarming with mosquitoes and sandflies, but now it is drained, and there is a good road made round it, though there appeared to be but few people to ride or drive. To the east of the town are several rather nice houses, and beyond that a newly finished church, very substantially built of squared stone. The style is Gothic, with buttresses, and a steep roof, and it looks as if planned to resist the storms and snows of a northern climate,—but what will keep out cold will keep out heat, so it is not unsuitable for its purpose. We were to start by the train for Panama at 7 A.M.; so having a hurried breakfast on board, we got everything ready to go on shore, when, from the deck, we had the pleasure of seeing the only morning train go off without us. We knew that the mails were not landed, so felt that we were safe; but it happened thus. The railway au-

thorities had told the officers that they must be quick, or that the train would have to wait. "Let it wait, then," they impudently answered. This did not suit the independent Yankees; so they started the train, and we unfortunate passengers and the mails were left behind. We then went on shore to pass away the time, but to get on shore was no easy matter. We had to land from the high-sided steamer to the wharf down a steep plank, by which they were discharging the cargo. It was a work of danger to us, but still more to the cargo, which was rolled down the plank, and it seemed to afford great amusement to the nigger crew when one package dashed against another on the pier. I was not, then, surprised at things being damaged in the transit; but nobody seemed to care.

So we landed, and walked about the town, inspected the new church, which one of our passengers, the Bishop of British Columbia, intended to consecrate, and then strolled along the shore. There was a nice cool breeze, and the sea rolled in over the coral reefs in great clear waves, and broke on the shore with the noise of thunder. There is often a high sea here; and at the end of the town, against the wharf, lies the wreck of the Royal Mail Steam-ship Company's ship the *Avon*, which was caught in a gale whilst lying at the wharf, could not get away, and was there dashed to pieces.

Tired of the shore, we returned on board for our luggage, but then to get back to shore again, was a still greater difficulty. The steep plank was now greased to help the descent of the boxes, and that we had to go down. Mrs. E— was helped down by two officers, one on each side, to the great amusement of the rest, and we gentlemen had to get down as we best could by the help of a rope. All this might have been avoided by a plank from the sponsons, but nobody seemed to care.

The train started at 3 P.M., and the heat was tremendous. Before we left, I was introduced to Mr. Parker, the manager of the line; and as I had heard that they often give free passages to people going for pleasure, I went to him and asked him to give me a return ticket, for I should add that the fare is £5 each way, which was excessively high for forty-nine miles. Mr. Parker heard what I had to say in silence, then sent me to take a single ticket for myself and wife, and gave us a free pass back; and knowing that I wished to make drawings on the line, he gave me a card to stop wherever I liked, and "the station-masters to entertain." This was the greatest boon to me, as it is very annoying to pass through a beautiful country without being able to stop.

And now we started to cross the Isthmus; a long American car held us all,—about sixty pas-

sengers,—and off we went. The first part of the line was on piles, over the creek that separates the island from the mainland, and for some way it was flat and marshy, with mangroves and swamp palms; then we got on more hilly ground, and the first station was on the banks of the Chagres river. The scenery soon became very beautiful, for the track ran through the thickest and most luxuriant tropical vegetation. Palms, bananas, bamboos, and all sorts of great broad-leaved plants, the larger trees covered with orchids and festooned with lianas. In some places we passed through patches of the primæval forest, with tall, smooth, white-stemmed trees; in other places, the trees were so enveloped with climbing plants that they looked like ruins covered with ivy. Then we passed cleared patches with Indian looking cottages, surrounded with orange and other fruit-trees; indeed, there was some novelty at every yard of the line.

The stations were wooden houses, painted white, with broad verandahs; they looked very nice, and generally had gardens in front, with the great scarlet *hibiscus*, passion-flowers of different sorts, and many others, in full bloom; but as it was now the dry season, the forest was not so full of flowers as it otherwise would have been. The rail is first carried up by the side of the river Chagres, and it crosses that

stream at San Pablo by a large iron bridge, like an horizontal iron trough, supported on stone piers. This great square trough, being painted red, is excessively ugly.

As we advanced, the country became more hilly, and we had beautiful views of the Chagres river. The ascent was gradual, and the track ran round the hills in very sharp curves; but as they do not go very fast, doing the forty-nine miles in three hours and a half to four hours, there is no great danger. It is a single line, and the trains pass each other near the summit. There is a telegraph, but they do not work it for the trains. When the telegraph posts were first put up, it was very difficult to keep them long, as the ants and other insects destroyed them so quickly; but now they have posts of cement, cast in a mould, which makes a strong and durable pillar. There has never yet been an accident; an occasional nigger being run over or killed, from his own carelessness, of course not counting as anything. At one station, called Matachin, there was a rather large village of native huts, and the black women came to the side of the train, selling oranges, very good sponge-cake, bits of sugar-cane, and bottled beer, and we saw "draught ale" painted on one thatched hut. We were soon off again, and passed along by a rivulet called the Obispo, a tributary of the Chagres river. It was

PANAMA RAILWAY

like passing through a continuous stove-house of tropical plants, and the temperature of the cars being 95° Fahr., put us much in mind of the same.

After Matachin, we soon arrived at the summit; and here is a small earth-cutting, and what was very fortunate, a spring of good water, so they fill up the tank here. It is not possible to see either sea from the summit. Perhaps it may be done from some of the adjacent mountains; but I think it would be difficult to find one from which both the Pacific and Atlantic were visible. From the summit, which is thirty-seven miles and three-eighths from Aspinwall, and ten miles one-fifth from Panama, the descent is much steeper; the hills are more broken, and the valleys narrower; all still covered with thick wood. We passed the pretty station of Paraiso (Paradise), and several others, and then ran down into a flatter country, and at last saw before us the blue waters of the great Pacific. The station is close to the water's edge, in the outskirts of Panama.

Immediately on our arrival there began a terrific disturbance. As the morning train had come across without either mail or passengers, the South Pacific steamer, which was already late, had to wait the whole day. So the passengers for Chili and Peru were immediately seized on by the officials, their baggage scrambled for by por-

ters, and they were all hurried off to the tender and put on board, without having time to say good-bye to anyone. A sword, that was to be given to the Peruvian Consul, was thrown to Mrs. E— ; a parcel for somebody else was tossed to me ; and though there was no necessity for hurrying us, we were pushed into different omnibuses, the drivers lashed the mules, and we were rattled over the stony road to the city of Panama.

CHAPTER IV.

Suburbs of Panama.—The City.—Population.—Cathedral.—Trade.—Islands of Perico, Flamenco, and Istrao.

We bumped first through the suburbs, through streets of tumble-down houses, where most of the inhabitants, intermixed with dogs, pigs, and poultry, were sitting in front of their doors. The women were generally cooking; the black children nearly always naked; and the dogs looked by far the cleanest and most respectable of the establishment. Yet here there were remains of better days, even in the suburbs; for a handsomely built stone church stood in an open square, and the houses round it were supported on light stone columns. The city itself looked as ruinous as the rest, with tall houses and narrow streets, and through these we were carried, and set down at the door of the Aspinwall House, an American hotel; and here most of the other passengers located themselves.

Here we got a bad bedroom,—but there was no better to be had. We dined on the ground floor, which, like a restaurateur's, had different tables about the room. The *cuisine* was not good,

but ice was plentiful, and all sorts of cool drinks were mixed at the bar. Here we were to stay a week, and things looked anything but inviting. By night we were pretty well tired, but we missed the rolling of the ship, and could not sleep. The inmates of a *café* opposite were noisy, and the click of the billiard-balls continued for a long time. About half-past twelve, the people came home from the theatre, bringing with them the head violinist,—a tall gaunt negro,—who, with a long cigar hanging out of the side of his mouth, played to them for a long time. He performed wonderfully well, so that we could not help listening to every note, and any other time I should have liked to have heard him,—but not then. Next, all the cocks awoke, and being a Spanish town, numbers are kept for fighting; and as it grew light, macaws and monkeys joined in the concert from the neighbouring houses.

Panama, one of the chief towns, and the principal port of the republic of New Granada, is situated on a promontory that projects into a large bay of the Pacific: strangely enough, although it looks over the sea, it faces east; this is caused by the turn of the isthmus. It is in lat. 9° 50′ N., and has a population of about 10,000. This Panama is not the original city of that name. Old Panama, so famous in history,—the city that was sacked by Morgan and the buccaneers,—stood

about seven miles off, close to the sea, but was defended from attacks by dangerous reefs: Morgan, however, landed and took it in the rear. He is said to have ascended a hill, near the present city, to reconnoitre the place before attacking it, and the hill is still called Morro de los Buccaneros, but I do not think he could see it from there at all. There is a beautiful view of the present city and the adjacent country, so perhaps this has been mistaken for some other hill.

Panama is not a large city; the streets are built at right angles, have been well paved, and are furnished with *trottoirs*. The fortifications are still in good repair; for the Spaniards built everything to last, and in many parts there is hardly a stone out of place on the parapet. The cathedral, in the principal square, is a large building, in the Roman-Spanish style, with a façade of brown stone, and two towers with short steeples on them; but the towers are painted white, which spoils the effect, and the steeples are faced with the large pearl oyster-shells found in the bay, but it does not look well. There are several other churches, but mostly in ruins; and several large convents, all well built, but now roofless. The interior of the cathedral is plain, with a nave and side aisles of round-headed arches, painted white, with the pulpit, candlesticks, and ornaments painted light blue; all in bad taste, but the size

makes it look pretty well. There were but few worshippers; and not many months before, all the priests were turned out of Panama, and there was no service at all in the churches. They have lately been allowed to return.

The trade of Panama is now chiefly in the hands of the railway company; the steamers for the South Pacific, for Vancouver's Island and California, for San Salvador and the coast, all running here, and sending their passengers over the isthmus to Aspinwall; but that does not do the town so much good as it might, for if the steamers keep their time, the rail takes the passengers away, and most of them never enter the town at all. The South Pacific line runs in conjunction with our West Indian steamers, but the American one from California is connected with the Aspinwall and New York boat; and as this sails every ten days, and the South Pacific and West Indian every fortnight, the passengers from England to California often have to wait several days in Panama, Thus, if people want to go from the north-west coasts of America to England, the best way is to go by the American steamer from Aspinwall to New York, and then cross the Atlantic by Cunard's, or one of those lines. They will do it in several days less time, and several pounds cheaper, the passage-money from Aspinwall to England, by St. Thomas's, being £40,

while from New York it is £25 or £20; this leaves £15 or £20 to go from Aspinwall to New York, and I do not think it costs so much.

Some of our passengers were bound for San Salvador, and so I went out in the tender to see them off, as the large steamers all lie at some islands two miles and a half from the town. These islands have been purchased as a station by the company; they are called Perico, Flamenco, and Islnao; they are wooded, and have fine springs of water. Then, on another day, the great Californian steamer was to sail, and with her several of our friends, including the Bishop of British Columbia and his wife, were to go, on their way to Vancouver's Island, so we went off again to say good-bye to them. We all went down to the quay, which is also the terminus of the railway, and on board the tender, and waited there till the train with the American passengers came in from Aspinwall. They were a rough-looking lot; and as they hurried on board, they were beset by numbers of people selling oranges, pines, cigars, and all kinds of things. Among the last of the passengers, a North American lady was carried from the cars, on a mattress, evidently in a dying state. Her husband was with her, and the doctor of the New York steamer; but she was unconscious of everything, and her heavy breathing was the only sign of life. They laid

her down on the deck in the midst of the row and confusion, her husband kneeling by her side, and occasionally moistening her parched lips with water. The bishop also went to her; but before we left the wharf she died. Death is always terrible; but to see it in the midst of such noise and riot was still more dreadful,—people buying and selling oranges, cigars, brandy, all around, and many of the passengers (for she came over in the luggage-van) not knowing that there was anyone ill on board. Her body was carried again on to the wharf, followed by her heart-broken husband. She had been very ill at New York, and they were taking her to California as a last resource; and though she was almost dying at Aspinwall, they brought her across the isthmus in one of the luggage-cars, hoping that she would recover at sea.

The tender then took us off to the Californian steamer, *The Golden City*, an immense ship, of about 3,000 tons burden. She was excellently arranged for passengers, with very nice state-rooms, fine large dining saloons, and everything clean and neat. Her open deck overhangs the sides, making a promenade all round; and she may do very well for the Pacific, but I do not think that I should like to cross the Atlantic in her,—though they must sometimes have bad weather enough off San Francisco.

The captain, an Englishman, showed us over everything. We then bid farewell to the Bishop and Mrs. Hills, returned on board our steamer, and went back by moonlight to Panama. The boat of the tender landed us near the Consul's house, and we walked back to the hotel. I must here mention the kindness of the officials connected with the railway and with the steamers. We had nothing to do but to ask leave, and they allowed us to go out in their tenders, or anywhere we pleased.

CHAPTER V.

San Pablo.—Iron bridge across the Chagres river.—The forest of Bambacoas.—Paraiso.—Its Reptiles.—Falls of the Obispo.

We had now arranged to go out for a day or two to some of the stations on the railway, and from what we had heard of its picturesqueness had selected San Pablo. It was some distance beyond the summit, and close to the iron bridge over the Chagres river. At the Panama terminus we found Mr. Parker, the Aspinwall superintendent, also going by the train, so we started under his guidance.

In the valley of the Obispo we stopped for some time, and as it was extremely pretty, I made a sketch from the line,—a good opportunity,—and soon after we arrived at San Pablo. The station, like the others, was a nice white wooden house, of two stories, surrounded with a verandah, and well open to the breeeze. We found the station-master, Mr. Cully, very civil, and his wife immediately began to think of dinner for us. But we wished for nothing then, and as they were going along the line some distance in a

hand-car, we accompanied them. Each station is provided with a hand-car, worked by two or four blacks, with a winch; and each station-master has to go along his part of the line in it every day, to see that it is in order. The station is close by the iron bridge which spans the Chagres river at Barbacoas. It is 525 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 40 feet above the river, so it is a very large construction. It has six spans, of a hundred feet each, of iron, and is supported by five stone piers.

We crossed the bridge in the car, and then we were set down, as I thought I could make a sketch there, but the bridge being painted red, was so excessively ugly that it spoilt everything near it. The mosquitoes, too, found me out; so after a hasty sketch of the station, we walked along the line for some distance. The forest is cleared for twelve or fifteen yards on each side of the track; but on each side of that, it is a thick wall of trees, matted with all sorts of smaller plants and creepers. It is so thick that, where there is no path, it is difficult to push one's way in for a single yard; even the cattle, which graze on each side of the track, do not get in,—but I suspect that there is nothing to tempt them. The forest was full of orchids, but as it was near the end of the dry season, not many were in flower. The most noted of the flowers, sometimes though rarely, found on

the isthmus is *Peristera alata*, named by the Spaniards the *Espiritu Santo*, or the Holy Ghost; for the blossom has the exact form of a white dove with outspread wings hovering in it.

We walked for some distance, but it was all one wall of trees; so sat down and waited for the car to take us back again. A little beyond, a great ant-eater, or ant-bear, lay dead; it was quite fresh, but the turkey buzzards had found it out. As it got dark, the forest seemed to awake, and was full of the cries of birds and monkeys, and we could hear a loud roar now and then at a great distance. At last we heard the car returning, and it soon ran us back to San Pablo.

After a homely meal, we retired to our room,—a good large spare room, with which each station is provided. We were tired, and, as it was much cooler than Panama, hoped for a good night's rest. But no, our lot was far otherwise. The adjoining room, like ours, was open to the roof, so we could hear tolerably plainly anything that went on there; and we were just going to sleep when we were startled by dreadful moans. Then a man walking about,—then dashing of water,—then groans again. We were now wide awake, and tried to make out what it was; then a few minutes of silence,—then the moans, and splashing of water again,—and all through the livelong night did this continue. We could not think

what the splashing was; but as our heads had been filled with reports of yellow and other fevers, we fancied it must be some poor wretch in the last stage bathing his burning head. We hardly slept all night, as the noise never ceased for many minutes. I asked Mr. Culley afterwards what it was, and he told me at once that his foreman had a rash on his hands from the effects of the sun, and all night he was in such pain that he was bathing them in cold water. Had we known this, we should have been satisfied.

The next morning, a thick fog covered everything; so having seen enough of San Pablo, we took the train and went back to another station, called Paraiso. Crossing the summit, the rail descended, at the rate of sixty feet in the mile, into the valley of the Rio Grande,—here a little rocky brook. Paraiso (Paradise) is beautifully situated in a valley, surrounded by forest covered hills. The station-master, Mr. Hughes, welcomed us on the platform, and seemed glad that we were come to stay here. The garden was better than usual, and gay with scarlet hibiscus, passion-flowers, and other creepers; and by the side of the house grew a bread-nut tree, with great glossy leaves two feet long, cocoa-nuts, bananas, and others;—and, what they seemed most to pride themselves on, some rose-trees. We were shown into a nice room, and soon afterwards the hand-car was ordered, as the

station-master had to visit some of the works. That we might see all we could, we accompanied him, though it was midday and the heat tremendous.

We went to the stone quarry, a basaltic rock, where a number of men were at work digging stone. There was a steam-engine, and a crushing mill where the basalt was crushed into small pieces, then sent in cars, as ballast, to different parts of the line. The sun was too hot for us, so we were glad to return, and in the afternoon I made a sketch of the station, and then, guided by Mr. Hughes's two little boys, took a walk in the woods, for as there was a village, there were pastures in all directions. But as these pastures are used by the cattle, wood-ticks are very numerous, and we suffered from them accordingly. They are what are called *carapatos* in Brazil and Spanish countries, and are a small sort of tick. They bury their heads in the skin, and then, if not soon found, they go on sucking the blood till they swell up to the size of a pea; but a slight itching generally tells of their whereabouts. I believe the proper way to get them off is to put a drop of oil on them; and it is said that if pulled off, the head remains in the skin, and causes a troublesome sore; but I always pulled them off without doing anything else, and never found any ill effects from it. By far the worst insect is the *colorodillo,* which is

neither more nor less than the English harvest-bug. I got well bitten by them, walking up a hill near Panama, and suffered dreadfully.

The next day, Mr. Hughes persuaded us to stay at Paraiso, saying he would take us to the falls of Obispo in his hand-car directly the train had passed, and he gave such a glowing description of it, embosomed in thick forest, and all the trees clothed with orchids, that we agreed to stay. I had a delicious bath in the morning with his boys, in a deep pool of the little river, and then we waited anxiously for the train. The trains do not run very regularly, so it is very dangerous to go along the line in these cars until they have passed, and so you have to choose the times between the up train and the down, and then it seemed to me rather a risk. While we waited, Mr. Hughes rushed into the house for his gun, and pointed out to us a long snake in one of the hibiscus-trees in his garden. It was about six feet long, very slender, and of a beautiful light green, so exactly like the shoots of the plants or the stems of the passion-flower, that when it was still, it was excessively difficult to distinguish it. A shot brought it to the ground, and one of the blacks, with a few blows of a stick, soon finished its existence. I do not think it was venomous; but all people here have the greatest dread of snakes. They are tolerably numerous, so it is as well to be care-

ful. Scorpions, too, are not uncommon ; but the danger from these sort of things in hot climates is generally overrated.

At last the train passed, and we started in the hand-car, worked by four blacks. It was a hard pull up to the summit, as the line ascends sixty feet in the mile ; hence it was a gradual descent to Obispo. We then, leaving the hand-car on a siding, walked by a narrow path about a hundred yards to the Falls. The river is dammed across by a barrier of rock, and below, the valley and the course of the brook are full of huge broken fragments. There was but little water, and the fall was a mere nothing ; but the whole place, surrounded with tall trees and tropical plants, was very pretty. Orchids and parasites of different sorts hung in masses on every tree. In the rainy season, there must be a fine river of water over the rocks. I made a slight sketch, and we returned to the line, hearing the Aspinwall train pass by just before we got to it. This was a great satisfaction, as now we felt safe for our journey back.

CHAPTER VI.

Return to Panama.—Tower of the Church of San Jerome.—Pearl Trade of Islas de las Perlas.—Conveyance of Treasure.—Cost of Railway from Panama to Aspinwall.

On our return to Panama the next morning, we left the Aspinwall Hotel without regret, and took up our quarters at the house of Mr. Henderson the British consul. He was an old friend of mine, having been secretary to Mr. Southern, in Buenos Ayres, fourteen years ago, when I was also there; but I had not seen him since that time. He kindly asked us to stay at his house during the rest of our visit at Panama, and we gladly accepted his offer. He had a very nice cool house, looking over the bay, and the N.E. wind used to blow in, sometimes with such violence that it was necessary to shut the windows.

We did not leave Panama without making an expedition to the ruins of the old city. It is situated behind a point of land about seven miles from the present town, but there is no carriage road to it, and on horseback it was difficult to find the way without a guide. Mr. Henderson therefore prepared a boat, and one morning we started at

daylight, and with a fair wind, soon ran over there. We could see the old town near the shore, but there was a troublesome reef of rocks which prevented our landing near it, and so we were put on shore nearly a mile from our destination. So we had to walk along the sand, and as it was sheltered from the wind, and fully exposed to the sun, the heat was terrific.

At last we got to the tower, the remains of the church of San Jerome. It was a massive square belfry, with three round-headed windows near the top on each side, and one square one in each story. Well built of squared stone, it bid fair to last yet as long as it now had, although some of the lower stones had been pulled out of the corners. Bushes and plants were growing on the top, and long creepers trailed out of the windows, making it look very pretty and picturesque, but giving an idea that they would soon pull the building down. I made a sketch of it; but amongst the trees, which gave no shade while they kept the air away, the heat was worse than on the shore, and I was obliged soon to give it up. The difficulty of drawing in this heat is excessive. Often, one cannot sit in the sun, for the heat strikes through any common umbrella (a cotton one with a thick lining is the best); and if one is in the shade, the heat knocks one up, and by the time a pencil outline is finished, one is actually tired, and

would rather rest or do anything than finish the drawing.

Besides this tower there was not much to see. An old stone bridge still spans the little river near, and a paved road leads some way into the forest; but I believe that there is little else, and it was too hot to explore. A few people live in rude hovels near, but they could tell us nothing; so, as we were to breakfast late at Panama, at 10·30 A.M. we were glad to return to our boat, and though so early, to quench our thirst with bottled beer.

There appears to be no manufacture in Panama, except the gold chains made by the Indians. They are made of wire, and look like round braid, but they were not pretty. Pearls are also sold here. They are brought from a group of islands called Islas de las Perlas, about sixty miles south-east of Panama, and they produce about one hundred thousand dollars worth of pearls a year. The large shells are exported to make mother of pearl. Good eatable oysters are also found here. The famous Panama hats, used and sold all over the tropical countries, are made in Guayaquil, of a sort of fine grass. They are very durable, but very expensive, varying from five dollars, for which a common one may be purchased, to the very fine ones at one hundred dollars.

Everything is very expensive in Panama. Washing is two dollars and a half a dozen; beer one

dollar a bottle. A carriage for a drive five dollars ; and the same for a lady's horse for a ride. A bath costs a dollar ; in fact, a dollar is about the same as a shilling in England. Even the shoeblacks in the street (for they do not take the trouble to black one's shoes in the hotel) charge fivepence. In fact, I suppose nobody would stop in Panama if they did not get high pay.

At last our time was up, and we took leave of our kind friends, and left Panama again by rail for Aspinwall. A fresh lot of passengers had arrived from the North and South Pacific, and a large freight of silver. It is said that, in the years 1855 to 1860, three hundred millions of dollars have been sent over this line without the loss of a single dollar. Of course the freight of silver and gold is one of the chief sources of profit to the line ; and with the excessively high fares for passengers—five pounds—it pays a good dividend. However, the difficulties of making it were very great. First, from Aspinwall it had to be carried over deep swamps matted with mangroves and vines. The workmen lived on board an old brig anchored near the shore. After that they had the hulk of a condemned steamboat to live in. Then, as the time progressed, they built rude shanties, raised on piles above the swamp. Sickness was rife among them. The Irishmen, getting hold of the rum, died in numbers. Then all sorts of

foreigners, attracted by the high wages, flocked there, and a thousand Chinese were imported; but though every possible care was taken of them, they became melancholy, and numbers committed suicide. In a few weeks but few remained. American dollars, however, and enterprise conquered everything, and on the 27th of January, 1855, the last rail was laid, the first clearing of Manzanilla island having commenced in May 1850. At Aspinwall large wharves are still being constructed. An iron lighthouse has been built, and at Panama the wooden pier has been replaced by one of iron, four hundred and fifty feet in length. The entire cost of the road is said to have been eight millions of dollars.

Arrived in the evening at Aspinwall, we went on board the *Solent* again. The officers were delighted when they saw Mrs. E— and myself walk down. "I knew it was you directly I saw you on the pier;" but as we had agreed to go back by their vessel, that did not require any great cleverness. However, the best cabin was ready for us, and all went well. The treasure came across in the same train in charge of Mr. Henderson's secretary—boxes of gold and great bars of silver, which were rolled on board and sent down the hatchway in a very unceremonious way. It was a curious sight to see the men, some black, some white, on the main deck, counting and book-

ing up the bars of silver by the light of the lamp; and it seemed rather a risk to leave such treasure unguarded. But none is ever lost. The weight of the bar is from one to two hundredweight, and in shape like a brick, only double or treble the size, making them inconvenient things for a pilferer to stow away.

CHAPTER VII.

Voyage to Kingston.—The Church.—Tomb of Benbow.—St. George's Church.—Dress of the Ladies.—Visit to Newcastle.—St. Catherine's Peak.—The Blue Mountain.

We had a rough passage in the leaky old *Solent* to Jamaica, and arrived at that benighted place April 24th, at 1 P.M. Our friend Colonel Nelson came on board, took us up to his own home,—the lodging-house in Duke Street which we had before visited,—and we stayed with him during our sojourn in Kingston. The next day, though it was very hot, I went into the town to draw some money from the bank, and afterwards went into the parish church. It is in the great square, a dusty desolate looking place, some wretched looking barracks and government offices form one side, tumble-down houses the other. The church has nothing to merit description except its ugliness, which a liberal coat of whitewash does not improve, but inside is the tomb of the gallant Benbow. A plain black slab with a quaint old English inscription marks his burial place, but the square pews with which the church is filled have encroached upon his tomb so as to cover up the first letter of each line. Seve-

ral other monuments of naval and military officers were also here, but the whole thing was in such bad taste, or rather no taste at all, that I did not care to examine them.

On Sunday we went to St. George's Church in Duke Street. The outside is like a substantial square red brick house, with sash windows and green Venetian shutters. In fact, it was so like houses one commonly sees, as to call for the remark that it was the first we had seen not apparently going to tumble down. There was a good congregation there, and the black ladies were dressed in their smartest, chiefly in white, but they appeared rather ludicrous in my eyes. If one sees a figure dressed in stiff white muslin with a bernouse gracefully thrown over the shoulders, a white silk bonnet with perhaps daisies or orange flowers in it, and then a face like a well polished boot, it always appears to me as if the lady were masquerading, and had blacked her face for fun. They themselves, however, are far from thinking so, and I daresay that my ideas of them in church would surprise them not a little. Indeed, I found that I was the one who was doing wrong, for I went to church in a white silk coat, which was not at all *en règle*. A friend of mine afterwards told me that he had done the same; and the next morning he had a visit from a fat official, dressed in black, and in the highest state of perspiration,

who remonstrated with him for appearing at church in his white coat, and begged him not to do so again.

Our great wish was, of course, to see the interior of the island, and our first expedition was to be up to Newcastle,—the cantonment and barracks of the 6th Regiment. Newcastle was rather a new establishment, the older ones, up Park Camp and Stoney-Hill barracks, having been visited by the yellow fever, though Stoney-Hill was 1,380 feet above the sea; but although Newcastle was 3,800 feet, yet the scourge has followed them even to that height.

Colonel Nelson also had to visit Newcastle, so we all went together. I hired a carriage of a Jew named Morris, and having ordered breakfast and riding-horses to be ready at the Gardens, half way, we left Kingston at 7 A.M., and drove off to these Gardens, where lived another Jew, Moses Lazarus. Our carriage was drawn by a pair of wretched half-starved horses, but we were obliged to take what we could get. We went out at the upper end of the town, and drove past the race-course,—a flat plain, now quite burnt up from the drought. The mountains beyond were very pretty, being so rugged that they looked as if they had been all crumpled up; and the rays of the early sun now lit up one side of the steep ravines, whilst the other sides were in deep blue shade.

Turning to the left, we entered a valley that leads up to the Gardens, down the bottom of which flows a clear rocky stream. It is dammed up at one place to supply Kingston with water, but it appears to me that nothing hardly is done toward irrigating the country. With mountains at the back, which supply these beautiful brooks, the whole of the lower country might be irrigated, and then would produce everything that was required. Industry and enterprise were the only things wanted. On the rocky slopes of the valley grew some magnificent aloes ;—some with flower-stems thirty or forty feet high, and large spikes of orange-flowers at the top. Numbers of humming birds fluttered round these flowers, sucking the juices or eating the insects in them,—never touching the flower except with their long bills.

We stopped at the door of Moses Lazarus, who supplies horses, carriages, and keeps a store, where every sort of hardware, linen, crockery, liquors, beer, wine, brandy, preserved provisions, and I believe everything else, may be bought; and Moses Lazarus himself has the reputation, and I believe truly earned, of being a thoroughly honest man,—I was almost saying the only honest man on the island. He had prepared a good breakfast for us, with a glass jug of sangaree, and then would take no payment for it, as he said he did not provide breakfasts for people, but got this

ready as we had ordered it. We were very much obliged, as we could have got none anywhere else, and then we hired his horses for a couple of days, and rode up to Newcastle.

"The Gardens" appear to have been so called from being the site of the old botanic garden; but the village close by is called Gordon's Town, probably a corruption. A little farther and the carriage road ended; and here, lying in the road with his head downwards, we found a soldier dead drunk in the full glare of the sun. Colonel Nelson propped him up against a bank, and sent back some men to carry him away. How can it be wondered at if these poor fellows suffer from fever and disease, if they drink rum to such an excess, and then sleep it off in the sun? The road now became only a horse-path, and a very rugged one it was, sometimes with a wall of rock on one side, and a tremendous precipice on the other. It was excessively pretty, often shaded with orange, mango, and other trees. We had before us something like a Welsh glen, with the addition of tropical trees, and gold and silver ferns, instead of oak ferns and polypody. The little stream below wound its way among grey boulders, and we forded it several times,—once near a very pretty waterfall. Then we got higher and higher by degrees, till we zigzagged up the steep shoulder of the mountain, and at the eleva-

tion of 3,000 feet above Kingston, arrived at the aerial camp of Newcastle.

Colonel Nelson introduced us to Colonel Hobbs, and he got us excellent accommodation in the rooms of an absent officer. The officers' quarters were higher than the rest, and are dotted about the hill in detached bungalows. We dined with Colonel Hobbs, and afterwards went out on the parade to hear the band play. It was delightfully cool, and we were glad to have blankets on our beds, but the cold water to wash in seemed the greatest luxury. At Kingston we had a bath-room with large tubs, but though the water was fresh, it never felt quite cold. The view from Newcastle was truly magnificent. In the distance was the flat country of Kingston, with the town just visible; and then beyond was Port Royal and the Palisades running out into the azure bay. Nearer, the eye ranged over a fine jumble of mountains and steep ravines; and to the left rose another mountain, on which is perched Flamstead, the country-house of the Governor. On another hill, a little lower, is a church and the bishop's house.

I was sorry to see the whole of the wood near Newcastle had been cleared away (if, indeed, there ever had been any), and they were still clearing some of the adjacent hill. I told them that they would ruin their water-supply if they cut down

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all the woods,—and already they have a very short supply; indeed, I think they made a mistake in putting Newcastle so very high, on that account; for undoubtedly, in the tropics, everything depends on an abundance of water. In Rio Janeiro, they were obliged to forbid any trees from being cut down on the Corcovado behind the town,—for from some of it being cleared, the springs on that mountain soon began to decrease.

After breakfast the next morning, we mounted our horses to return to Kingston; but an officer proposed that we should vary our route by riding round by St. Catherine's Peak, which rises behind the cantonment to the height of 5,070 feet, and kindly offered to be our guide; we should then get into another valley, from which there was a fine view of the Blue Mountain. So instead of descending we went up higher, and entered a wood full of tall tree-ferns. It was rather too late for views, for at ten o'clock mists generally rise on the mountains, and the whole country towards the north was quite obscured; but the wood-road was beautiful. There were great tree-ferns with stems thirty or forty feet high, with spreading tops like small palm-trees, and all the banks carpeted with different sorts of other ferns. The trees over them were not large, but crowded with orchids, all fostered by the continual damp, so altogether it was a fine specimen of tropical

vegetation. It was not however thick, like a Brazilian or Panama forest. It was easy to go in anywhere, and was about as close as a neglected English wood.

The path, which was called the Fern-walk, led us out on to the open hillside, and although the Blue Mountain was obscured with clouds, we had a fine view down the valley. The sides of the valleys were steep, but cultivated and planted with coffee-bushes, and cottages were perched about on different hills; a stream at the bottom ran down to the southern coast, and became the Yallah river. The whole was extremely like some of the views in Madeira,—almost like looking down into the Corral, but not quite so rocky, nor on so large a scale. We returned by another notch of the mountain into the Newcastle valley, and then Mrs. E—, and the rest of the party, stopped at a *barbacu*, as it is called, to see the process of drying coffee. I had often seen this, so rode slowly on, as I wished to make a few pencil sketches of the scenery on my way down, but regretted much that I could not have a few hours hard work at drawing in the Fern-walk,—for these novel forms of vegetation require careful study. We all joined again at "The Gardens," and leaving our horses there, hired a carriage of the honest Lazarus, and drove back in the evening to Kingston.

CHAPTER VIII.

Description of Spanish Town.—Bog Walk.—St. Thomas in the Vale.—Rio Cobre.—Village of Linstead.—Entertainment at Ewarton.—Village School.—Mount Diavolo.—Village of Moneague.—Sugar Estate at Linstead.—Cultivation of Jamaica.—Return to Kingston.

March 1. We now were bent on seeing some of the interior of the island, so hired a carriage for three or four days to take us another tour,—to Spanish Town, Linstead, and the Moneague. As Morris had supplied such bad horses, we went to another Israelite, Morrice, and thought that we could not again encounter such sorry hacks; but we found to our cost that there is always, or nearly always, "a worse."

In the afternoon of a hot day, we took the train to Spanish Town, hereby saving a long dusty drive; our carriage and horses were to follow in the evening. After our experience of Jamaica, we might have expected the railroad from Kingston to Spanish Town to be bad, but still we were surprised at the disreputable look of the whole concern. The first-class carriages were worse than English third-class, and consisted of a dirty-looking truck, with six dusty armchairs in it, and

there we took our places. In the other carriages were quantities of noisy, happy niggers; and there was a brisk trade in cakes, sweets, or candies as they called them in the United States, on the platform,—everything else seemed defunct. However, at last we started, and the dirty rail jolted us safely to the dirty station of Spanish Town, whence a dirty omnibus took us to the town, and deposited us at the door of the lodging-house which had been recommended to us, namely, Miss Stewart's.

Miss Stewart—a fat, good-tempered mulatto-woman—welcomed us most cordially, never asking who we were or where we came from, though we had been before told we ought to have a letter of introduction. This sort of nonsense seems to pervade most of the West Indies; everyone pretending to be above their business, and affecting that they have been used to better things, and seeming to fancy that some day they will see good times again. However, Miss Stewart had no such nonsense, but busied herself to make us comfortable. "Kill you a fowl for dinner; fish; —callipever very good; laike pepper-pot?—No handle to the door, put a chair against it when you inside," etc., etc. So then dressing ourselves respectably, we walked to the King's House to call on the Governor, and were most kindly received by him and Mrs. Eyre. We found we had crossed

a letter to ask us to dine there the next day, but could not now, as we were on our journey.

King's House is well built and arranged, with large cool reception-rooms, and the whole square looks handsome; but how shall I describe the rest of Spanish Town? I thought Kingston was bad, dirty, and ruinous, and I fancied I had seen some funny specimens of towns in South America and Africa, and such like countries, but Spanish Town is the worst I have ever seen; and it has not even the charm of being foreign, which often makes dirt and rubbish picturesque. But here was an English negro town of the very worst style. It never could have been good, for the houses are small and ill-built, streets hot, for the buildings are low, and let in all the sun. The houses are all in ruins, and the climate too dry to make them pretty with tropical vegetation; everything was tumbling down, or propped up, which looks even worse. Where the roofs were strong enough, I saw cactus growing on them. The square brick pillars which sometimes inclose the houses, I saw propped up with wooden stakes. The churches were in the worst style of architecture;—in fact, everything was the same. The negroes talk a lingo which is difficult to understand, and seem to do little but quarrel in the street. The only thing in favour of Spanish Town was that it was cooler than Kingston;—

at least Miss Stewart's was a cool house, and we slept comfortably there.

The next morning the carriage, a light Yankee one, came to the door, but when I saw the ponies,—they could not be called horses,—my mind misgave me. They put me in mind of the cabman's horse that the boy said had been fed on sugar-tubs, because he could see the hoops in him: but we were obliged to start, and as we had but one portmanteau, we knew that we should not overload them, and so hoped for the best. The road for the first four miles was uninteresting, but after that we entered a pretty valley, and drove through the famous Bog Walk. The valley is narrow, and in most places there is only room for the road and the beautiful Rio Cobre,—a clear rushing stream, like a large Welsh brook. The hills were covered with forest, and the stream was overhung with all sorts of tropical trees. Palms, bamboos, and different forest trees, covered with creepers and orchids; and all sorts of ferns grew among the rocks. For four miles this was one of the most lovely drives I have ever seen, and every turn of the valley disclosed some new beauty. We then came out into the large wide expanse of St. Thomas in the Vale. As the Bog Walk is the outlet of this valley, it seems to have derived its name from the corruption of the Spanish word, *Boca*, as it is the mouth of the valley, and it

THE BOG WALK.

acquired its present appellation in the same way as the Bogue forts and Bocca Tigris, between Macao and Canton. The Rio Cobre still retains its Spanish name; but I was much puzzled to see that, on the milestones by the side of the road, the distance was measured from "Santiago de la Vega." The driver could not explain it, and knew of no place of that name; but I found that it was the original name of Spanish Town, and that it was still used in all official documents, or those sort of things. The English are fond of altering foreign names, and usually do not improve them; but there are so many Santiagos in Spain, Chili, Mexico, and Cuba, that there may be some excuse for changing this.

Soon after leaving the Bog Walk, we came to the large village of Linstead, where we were to breakfast and to rest the horses. The "Tavern" was clean, but had not much in it besides furniture; however, we sent out and got bread, eggs, coffee, and milk, and so did well. Leaving Linstead, we drove on towards the mountains, along the sides of one of which, Mount Diavolo, the road to the Moneague ascends. We passed along a very pretty road, and in one place the bamboos were most magnificent. Some blacks were making a fence here, and I got one of them to cut me a few lengths of bamboo with their cutlasses, and I brought them to England as specimens. These

cutlasses are called *machete* in Cuba and the Spanish islands, and are sometimes called machet in English. They are large knives, with wooden handles and blades about two feet long, made just like a Turkish yataghan; like them they have no guard, but are rather broader than the yataghan in the blade. Every negro carries one when he goes into the woods, and the sugar-canes are cut with them. In hostile encounters they become most formidable weapons; indeed, sometimes, in St. Domingo, the Spanish troops have been attacked and defeated by negroes armed only with these cutlasses.

We again stopped near the foot of the mountain, at a place called Ewarton, to rest and feed the horses, which already had given signs of their weakness,—one jibbing at the least ascent, and the other being unable to draw the carriage. Here at Ewarton we rested an hour and a half, and the owner of the sort of roadside grog-shop provided grass for the horses, and chairs for us to sit in the shade. We also got bread, sardines, and oranges, so made our luncheon. Liquors, of course, are to be found everywhere in Jamaica;—Edinburgh ale, champagne, and everything of that sort, are to be bought in these shops, and they are generally supplied with tins of salmon, oysters, sardines, and other things, that come from England, but of West Indian produce,—nothing.

To pass away the time, we went to see the village school, which was close by, indeed, within hearing distance; and in a large thatched and wattled room we found the black schoolmaster teaching about twenty young negroes of both sexes. They appeared to be quite as far advanced as the children in most village schools in England, and they seemed very sharp; their black beady eyes almost starting out of their heads with eagerness as we questioned them: but as their master taught them with the peculiar nigger pronunciation of English, making such words as "oak," "road," into two syllables, viz., *o-ark*, *ro-ard*, it was not likely that they would speak very well when they grew up.

We now started for the ascent of Mount Diavolo, but long before we had accomplished a quarter of the ascent, we had to get out and walk, and rest the horses about every hundred yards. The view over the parish of St. Thomas in the Vale was most magnificent. The vale was tolerably flat, but surrounded on all sides by mountains, and behind the first ones rose the Blue Mountains, and the Port Royal range. It was for the most part thickly wooded, though striped here and there with the bright green of sugar estates. The shoulders of Mount Diavolo, on each side of us, were clothed with thick forest, and from among the trees blue columns of smoke arose, showing

where the blacks were clearing patches of land for cultivation. In the foreground were negro houses, surrounded with bananas, orange-trees covered with both fruit and blossom, and a mass of tropical vegetation, and over all waved tall cocoa-nut trees. I made a sketch while resting the horses. The second part of the ascent was much worse than the first. The jibber now would not work at all, so the driver had to pull him on by the bridle whilst I ran by his side with a whip; and thus, by a few yards at a time, we journeyed up the hill, to the immense amusement of all the little nigger children, who rushed out of their huts to look at us. In due time we arrived at the summit, which was a deep cutting in the hill, ornamented with beautiful bamboos, and began our descent to the Moneague.

First, the road wound round the shoulders of the wooded hills, and then descended through a grass country, with here and there a "pen," or gentleman's house. There were plenty of cattle in the pastures, but as far as we could see of them, the "pens" were in the usual state of neglect and apparent ruin. We passed some large trees with magnificent broad-leaved creepers climbing up them, and soon after arrived at the Moneague.

The Moneague is a scattered village, and boasts rather a good tavern, and, for a wonder, there was

St THOMAS'S IN THE VALE

something to eat in it, and to make the wonder greater, they gave us almost the only tender piece of meat I met with in Jamaica, viz., the head and forequarter of a sucking pig. We talk of tough meat in England, but no one can imagine what meat is in the West Indies,—the hardness and stringiness make it almost uneatable. The bill next morning was tremendous ; the horses' corn, bundles of grass, and their being turned out, were all charged separately ; and on my expostulating with the black waiter about it, he said, coolly, "Ah! it is three shillings more, as I forgot to charge for your bedroom." The bill amounted to about twenty-four shillings altogether. However, we paid, and started on our return, and the horses dragged us up this side of the mountain better than they had up the other, for the sun as yet had hardly risen high enough to shine over the hill, and it was a little cooler for them.

The view over St. Thomas in the Vale looked quite as beautiful as it did the day before ; and as it was early, it was a little clearer, and we saw the range of the Blue Mountains plainer. We stopped again at Ewarton to bait the horses, and were much pleased to see the humming birds in the trees behind the house,—they would allow us to come very close and look at them, not being disturbed by the people living there.

Before we got to Linstead, we turned aside to

see a sugar estate, and were shown over it with great civility by the manager, a Scotchman. This estate was not large, and was worked in the old-fashioned way,—without steam. The crushing-mill was turned by bullocks, about twelve being harnessed to it at once. The juice was conveyed from the mill to the boiling-house, where it was converted into sugar; and behind, a still was in operation making rum. The cane, after the juice is pressed from it, is called *trash*, and is stacked in a house and kept dry, and is then used as fuel to boil the sugar,—and so we saw the whole process. There seemed to be no want of labour just here, but the negroes, when they work at all, do but little: they go into the field at six o'clock and leave it at ten, considering that that is a day's work, and at least two days in the week they do nothing at all,—one being market-day, is quite a sufficient excuse for idleness.

This indolence entirely prevents the culture of cotton, which might be produced to any extent in Jamaica: but cotton must be picked exactly when it is ripe, whereas sugar may wait for a week or two without deteriorating, and a shower of rain does it no harm, but rather the contrary. It seems a great pity that the cultivation of a rich country, such as this, should be entirely stopped; but it is quite natural that idle people—or indeed any people—would rather live as they can on

the scanty produce of their own ground, than work for somebody else ; and if it were not that the negroes are the most improvident race in the world, in a short time there would be no one to work in the fields in Jamaica,—and it is my opinion that by degrees as the blacks acquire land and grow patches of cane for themselves, they will supply the sugar, and the large estates must go out of cultivation for want of hired labour.

We slept that night at Linstead, and our dinner was entirely of English produce, except the eggs : we had ham, preserved salmon, Scotch ale, green-gage jam, and orange marmalade ; and this in a country where every sort of fruit is grown, and oranges hang on every tree ; and yet they import marmalade from England, where it is made with sugar which they themselves have sent there. The bread, too, is made of American flour. Thus, hardly anything is of native produce. We slept at night with all the windows open of course, and the air was quite loaded with the scent of orange blossoms, several trees in full flower being near the house. It rained heavily, which cooled the air, but it hardly laid the dust in the roads.

In the morning, a neatly dressed mulatto-girl walked into the room, and addressed Mrs. Elwes, "May I stay with you?" Mrs. E. said "Yes,"

not knowing quite what she meant, but thought she wished to stay from curiosity to see her clothes, and other things, remembering that they often did so in Norway. She went on: "You are going to England; may I go with you?" then we began to see what she wanted, and found that she wished to go with us, as a servant, to England, without wages or anything. That we could not agree to, as it was rather too far to risk carrying a servant of that sort, who would most likely be quite useless, or more probably a perfect nuisance when she was there; so we left her and drove off. It was market-day, and the street was crowded with negroes, and from one we bought twenty-five oranges for twopence; they were excellent oranges, very sweet and juicy, but with thick, rough skins. I at first refused them, choosing the smooth-looking ones, but a policeman, who was keeping order, showed me which were the best.

We went slowly through the Bog Walk again, I stopping to sketch, Mrs. E. to collect ferns.—The passers by all warned her against the insects. "Missus, you go into the bush you get plenty of wood-ticks," and she found out afterwards to her cost that they were right. As we drove towards Spanish Town, a woman stopped us to sell star-apples; we bought some, and certainly they were a delicious fruit to eat in the heat of the day. The inside is like cream and custard, and very

sweet and refreshing, and the pulp mixed in a tumbler with the pulp of an orange, and a little broken ice, is delicious. We dined at Spanish Town at Miss Stewart's, and drove to Kingston in the cool of the evening. This road, for twelve miles, is through a flat swampy country, and appears the very hotbed of malaria and mosquitoes. There was nothing of interest, except some fine specimens of the barren fig-tree, with enormous trunks and buttresses projecting on all sides, and the marsh by the sides of the road was full of tall ferns.

CHAPTER IX.

Visit to Flamstead.—The Mango-tree and Plantain.—The *Fourcroya Gigantea*.—Morant Bay.—Its Inhabitants.—Reception at Blocksberg.—Scenery of Jamaica. — Its present condition.

March 6th. Governor Eyre kindly invited us to stay a short time at Flamstead, his country-house, on the top of one of the Port Royal mountains, and we were to meet him and Mrs. Eyre at the Gardens, which place is situated at the foot of the mountain-paths, one of which leads to Newcastle, the other up a side valley to Flamstead. I wished to go up to Newcastle again, to make a drawing of the tree-ferns on St. Catherine's Peak, and had prepared so to do, intending to sleep at the Gardens if I could get no other resting-place ; but on the day before, Captain K—, an officer of Engineers, came down to Kingston, and asked us to go to Newcastle, as Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean were to dine at the mess of the 6th Regiment, on the invitation of Colonel Hobbs, and we were to meet them. This altered our arrangements ; and as Captain K.'s carriage was to return to the Gardens on Tuesday morning, Mrs. E— and I went in it

THE FERN WALK

for that distance, and then took riding-horses as before up to Newcastle.

We rode up to Captain K.'s quarters, and leaving our horses there, went off immediately to the fern walk. I worked at my drawing for some time, whilst Mrs. E— collected ferns. We then returned to the barracks; but it seems that the officers of the Sixth had had some quarrel among themselves (though we did not know what it was about) so we were not asked to dine at the mess, and had to accept Captain K.'s hospitality. He also borrowed a room for us, otherwise we must have gone back to Kingston, or risked some sort of a shake-down at the excellent Lazarus's.

The next morning I was up in good time to finish my sketch, but soon the mists rose up from the northern side of the mountain, and actually turning to rain, I was driven back for shelter. After breakfast, we wished Captain K— and Colonel Hobbs farewell, the latter apologising much to us (but what about we did not know), and then we rode down again to the Gardens, wondering much at the behaviour of the officers of the Sixth.

We stayed at the Gardens till four o'clock, when the Governor and Mrs. Eyre drove up. They had sent saddle-horses for us down from Flamstead, so we mounted, and rode off directly. The path led up a beautiful side valley, down

which rushes a clear rivulet to join the larger stream at the Gardens. The vegetation was luxuriant, the lower part of the dell filled with great plantains, the sides of the hills covered with mango-trees ; in fact, there are such numbers of these, that there are not enough pigs to eat the fruit that falls. The best mango in Jamaica is called "No. 11," that variety being so labelled when it was introduced. The plantain, or banana, thrives everywhere; and if the people had any industry, I should think that it would answer to grow the other variety, *Musa textilis*, of the stalk of which Manilla hemp is made. The plantain suits a lazy people well. It requires planting but once; for the old stem being cut down after fruiting, numbers of suckers spring up from the roots. The fruit can be eaten raw or cooked ; and it will produce more nutritive matter on a given quantity of land, than any other plant. The leaves are useful for a number of purposes ; in Tahiti they will make a house of them in a few minutes ; but here the blacks have lost the useful arts of savage life, and learnt but few of those of civilisation.

Half-way to Flamstead is a coffee plantation, called Dublin Castle, and that being passed, the ascent becomes very steep ; the path, however, was good, the horses were accustomed to it, and we cantered along at the edge of the precipices

without fear of tumbling over. From one steep ridge, called "John Crow's tavern,"—a sort of backbone between two gullies,—there was a splendid view, looking down the valley; the Newcastle hills on the right, another range of the Port Royal mountains on the left, and in front the distant plain of Kingston,—all bathed in the golden light of the setting sun.

Flamstead is a very comfortable house, but of one story only. It is situated on the very top of one of the mountains which overlook Kingston, and being 3,800 feet above the sea, we found it delightfully cool,—indeed, we had a fire in the drawing-room in the evening.

The next morning we set out for a long ride to another gentleman's house on the summit of a neighbouring mountain. The path wound round the sides of the hills and along the edge of steep ravines, along places which would utterly prevent nervous people from going there at all. The views down into the valleys were very fine; and from one spot we saw the whole of the Blue Mountain, with all its shoulders, ravines, and buttresses, from top to bottom. A few light clouds hung about the summit, but occasionally they blew away, and we then saw the peak plainly. It is a fine mountain, and the highest peak is said to be 7,360 feet above the sea. We arrived at Blocksberg,—a pretty one-storied house,—about

noon. We put up our horses, but found that the owner was not at home. From the garden was a splendid view, looking right over Kingston and Port Royal, and in front was a fine jumble of mountains and steep-sided ravines; those below opened out to the Yallah river, and the next valley beyond ran down to Morant Bay.* On the lawn in front was a fine specimen of an aloe, about thirty feet high. I think it was a Brazilian aloe, *Fourcroya gigantea* —the flower was gone, but it was covered with seeds. Looking over the mountains and valleys

* Since the above was written, Morant Bay became notorious as the place where the insurrection of the negroes broke out, and where such fearful scenes of bloodshed took place. There seems to be no doubt but that this insurrection was the premature explosion of a plot against the white population of Jamaica; and the probable cause of these disturbances is the foolish idea of giving black people the same rights, and making them politically equal with whites. These sort of countries must be either white or black,—one must be the governing power. In St. Domingo the negro is at the head of affairs; in British islands the whites should have the power. In Jamaica, the whites number about 15,000, the negroes 400,000;—if once the latter had got possession of the island, it would have cost thousands of lives and ten thousands of pounds to have reconquered it. But fortunately we had the brave and determined Eyre at the head of affairs,—one who would take decided measures, and risk the responsibility of doing so; and being ably seconded by Nelson and Hobbs, this dreadful rebellion was checked, put down, and utterly crushed out at once, and Jamaica—and perhaps all our West Indian possessions—were saved.

the lights and shades from the passing clouds were magnificent; but they soon gathered thickly around, and we had hardly entered the house, when the rain descended in torrents, and we were most thankful we had so good a shelter as Blocksberg.

Though the owner was not at home, he was expected that day, and as the Governor had sent a boy on before to say we were coming, the servants expected us. The cook brought out some wine, and prepared a fowl for our luncheon. At a quarter past one o'clock it was ready, and just going to be served up, and as the ride and cool mountain-air had made us very hungry, we were quite prepared to do justice to it, when who should ride up but the owner. He came in, and welcomed us most warmly, but no luncheon followed him;—nothing was good enough for us,—hampers were unpacked, delicacies put down to be cooked, tins of salmon and oysters opened,—the mule that was coming up from Kingston with other wines and beer was waited for, and although we begged him not to give himself so much trouble (for we were starving all the time), he would not listen, but everything must be done to honour us. We were famished, and it was just four o'clock before we sat down to the luncheon that we had been expecting since one o'clock. At 4·15, we had to start on our return; for the rain

had hardly ceased, and a thick black-looking fog covered the hills, and as darkness comes on very rapidly, it is better not to be caught by night, and in such weather, on these precipitous paths. So we wished our kind friend good-bye, though he wished us to stay all night, and arrived at Flamstead without accident before seven o'clock.

We left Flamstead with regret the next morning after breakfast, our kind host lending us horses to ride down to the Gardens, and most excellent beasts they were. Strong and sure-footed, they seemed to go up and down the steepest places with but little exertion, and unlike all the other horses that we had ridden or driven in Jamaica, they had some flesh on their bones. Our luggage was carried down on two boys' heads, a small boy, about thirteen, carrying a portmanteau. We passed him at Dublin Castle, but had to wait a long time at the Gardens for him; it was too much of a load, and at last when he came he was quite exhausted, and crying because he knew he was late; however, a little extra pay soon set him right again. Our horses returned to Flamstead, and we drove off in one of Mr. Lazarus's carriages to Kingston.

Jamaica is certainly a most beautiful island in the way of scenery, and if well cultivated, would be most productive; it was so once,—at least everyone says so,—but the rich people of those

days did but little good in their generation. No public works seem to have been done,—no quays, no bridges, no works for irrigation,—no churches nor buildings of any sort; everything seemed to have gone on for the time only, and everyone seemed to have lived in a fast, low-lived style. They appear to have made money enough and spent it foolishly, or else taken it to England and spent it there. Residents now like to talk of the good old times, and to boast of the luxury, the hospitality, and the grand style in which people formerly lived. But I never saw a house which might have been a good one; and though certainly everything decays here quickly, yet there are no remains of anything which might give us an idea of greatness. In other tropical countries it is not so; in Manilla, for instance, there are old stone houses with balustrades, and broad steps leading down to the water; but in Jamaica there is nothing. And now that the money is gone, the source of wealth is gone, and everything seems to be in a pitiable state. Certainly the planters appear to have been hardly treated. Slavery being abolished, of course all their former ways of working their estates were knocked on the head. They then had to begin afresh; and when labour became scarcer, and therefore sugar more expensive to produce, they had to compete with the sugar from places like Cuba, where

the Spaniards still hold their slaves. Tobacco they might grow; but there the excise and Havana again were in their way. Cotton might answer; but cotton must be gathered exactly when it is ripe, or one storm of rain may ruin it, and then perhaps not a black would work when they were most wanted. Rum is produced on every sugar estate, and can be sold at the still at eighteen pence per gallon; but what sort of duty do we put on this production of our colony? nine shillings per gallon! So that which is one of our best and most wholesome liquors, is nearly excluded by this tremendous impost. However, I suppose it has been all known, considered, and wrangled over; but it is difficult to see at once in what the benefit of all these regulations exists; we see the result, and we see what a state Jamaica is in, but what can you expect of a place where blacks are allowed to be magistrates, and where there are nigger members of Council?

CHAPTER X.

Voyage to St. Domingo. — Distance from Kingston to Jacmel, and from Jacmel to St. Thomas's.—Hotels. —Sanitary state of St. Thomas's.—Its Steam Fleet.— The prevailing Language.

We left Kingston on the 11th, in the *Tamar*, for St. Domingo and St. Thomas's; and as we steamed slowly down the harbour towards Port Royal, the whole place looked most lovely. We could not see the dirt and ruin of the town, and everything was dressed in its best. A blue mist hung over Kingston and the plain beyond, and all the precipitous sides of the ravines and shoulders of the mountains caught the gleams of the early sun. Above all,—at this hour without his usual robe of cloud,—the peak of the Blue Mountain towered into the clear sky. The bay was like glass, and all the buildings, cocoa-nut trees, and ships at their anchorage, were reflected on its surface. Two or three long-masted schooners, with their white sails, were trying to get out, and floated lazily about, waiting for the sea breeze. Everything looked beautiful; but our paddles soon bore us away, and having stopped to pick up the mails at Port Royal, we got out to sea,

and stood along the southern coast of Jamaica for Hayti, or St. Domingo.

Kingston to Jacmel is 255 miles; that was our first stopping place, where we landed the mails and took in some passengers, one of them a great jet-black negro, a near relation to Soulouque, I believe; he took a first-class passage to England. From Jacmel to St. Thomas's, 470 miles. At St. Thomas's we had to stay two whole days, and our time hung heavy on our hands; it is a pretty island, but there is nothing to do and nothing to see. It is too hot to walk about much, and carriage hire—and indeed everything else—is very dear. One day we thought to take a drive to pass away the time; so I asked a black fellow, who had just set down some people from his two-horse carriage, what he would charge,—"five dollars an hour," was the answer; so having no particular reason for a drive, I left him. St. Thomas's boasts of two pretty-fair hotels,—one kept by an Italian, named Bonelli, is the best, but it was full; so we went to the Commercial. We dined at the table d'hôte, in a wide verandah overlooking the harbour, and they treated us pretty well. Ice was plentiful, indeed it is the greatest luxury here, and has become almost a necessity. The Danish government allows the monopoly of selling ice to one house, which is bound under a heavy penalty never to be without

a supply. The fruit-market, with its avenue of cocoa-nut trees, was an amusing scene, and furnished me with a good subject to draw.

St. Thomas's has a bad reputation for sickness, and it has often suffered severely from yellow fever. It is thought that this unhealthiness proceeds from the water in the harbour becoming stagnant. The entrance is narrow, and it is very full of shipping; therefore a great deal of dirt is collected, and as there is hardly any tide, the water gets loaded with filth, and is for a long time unchanged. But we hear more of these West Indian fevers when we are in England than out here; and frequently we did not know whether the islands we had visited were in a healthy state or not until we read about them in the English papers.

It seems very odd, with so many islands in our possession, that the West Indian Mail Company should choose this, a Danish island, as the rendezvous of their immense steam-fleet: but it has a good harbour, and is so situated that all the lines conveniently meet here. There was some idea of a change, and making their depôt at Antigua. Although it is a Danish island, English is the general language, and I do not think the negroes understand a single word of Danish.

CHAPTER XI.

Voyage to St. Thomas's.—St. Eustatius.—Guadaloupe.—Dominica—La Rosseau, the Capital.—Martinique.—Volcanic appearances of the Mountains.

March 17th. We left St. Thomas's at noon, in the *Derwent*, for the Windward Islands, and as we steamed out of the bay the white-looking town, backed with mountains, made a very pretty looking panorama. Then we found ourselves amongst a cluster of islands,—Tortola and St. John's to the northwards,—and passed by a steep isolated rock called "Frenchman's Cap." The next morning, at daybreak, we sighted St. Eustatius, or, as the blacks call it, "Statia," a perfect cone, 1,950 high, with a notch in the summit, which was formerly the crater, and soon afterwards we arrived at St. Christopher's, or as it is usually called, St. Kitt's. This is a high, steep island, about eighteen miles long, running up to a cone in the middle, but its long sloping sides are very favourable to the growth of sugar; they are therefore carefully cultivated, and appeared divided into squares of different coloured greens. It is in a thriving state, and exports a good deal

St Christopher

of sugar. The highest mountain is called Mount Misery, and its summit is 4,315 feet above the level of the sea. The chief town is called Basseterre, distant from St. Thomas's 150 miles.

In the afternoon we passed Nevis. Its peak rising to the height of 3,595 feet, was dimly visible to us through torrents of rain. From St. Kitt's we went seventy miles to Antigua, and entered its fine harbour; but it was dusk by the time we were anchored, so we saw little of it. It appeared to be an excellent harbour, sheltered by moderately high hills from all winds.

Directly we anchored, the shore-boats crowded round the steamer, with pines, oranges, bananas, and all sorts of fruit. The noise and squabbling among the blacks was extraordinary, and not a few female voices (for in most of the boats were women to sell the fruit) joined in to increase the hubbub; one man in his eagerness fell into the water between the boats, but was soon fished out again, and the pulling, pushing, and quarrelling then was renewed with greater vigour than before. The name of the chief town is St. John's; and the island is famous for its pines,—the black Antigua variety being known all over the world.

From Antigua we went sixty-eight miles to the French island of Guadaloupe, and got there before daylight. There was no lighthouse, and as it was very thick cloudy weather, we had to lie off for

some time before we could go up to the town. Presently the fog lifted and disclosed the whole scene. The island is very steep and high, and seems broken into numerous ravines and valleys. At the south end, the Soufriere rises to the height of 5,500 feet. All the upper parts of the mountains are clothed with thick forests; below them is cultivated land, with bright green patches of sugar-cane. The chief town, Basseterre, is neat and flourishing,—in fact, the towns on the islands belonging to other powers bear rather a favourable contrast with the British possessions in the West Indies.

Leaving Guadaloupe, we ran fifty-three miles to Dominica, which was in sight the whole distance. This was a magnificent-looking island, mountainous, and broken into great valleys,—Rupert's Cape, stretching out on the north coast, looking dark against the light blue beyond; all the higher shoulders of the mountains were clothed with wood, making one wish to land and explore the tempting-looking ravines. A few wreaths of blue smoke, curling up above the trees, showed where they were burning the wood, and clearing patches of land for cultivation. The officer, when he went on shore to land the mails, gave me a seat in his boat, so I had an opportunity of seeing La Rosseau, the capital of the island. We landed at a poor, broken pier, and

walked up to the post-office to deliver the mails. It was a wretched town, not quite in such a dusty, ruinous state as Kingston, but still utterly without any signs of prosperity. The street was called Jail Street, as a passing nigger told me, and seemed one of the chief streets of the town, or village, as we might rather call it,—for it was only a collection of rubbishy bungalow kind of houses. Once it was paved; but now the grass had grown between all the stones, and that was killed and withered by the drought: nature had done something to ornament it, but human art—nothing. A blue mountain at the end of the street, some tall cocoa-nut trees waving above the houses, and flowers,—wherever they had a chance to grow,—gave a little beauty to the scene. I saw, hanging over one wall, great masses of that beautiful creeper, the blue Clitorea, covered with blossoms; on another wall was a lilac creeper, the name of which I know not, but I gathered seeds from all.

Having delivered the mail-bags, we returned to the steamer, and soon were again under weigh. As we left the island, it looked still more beautiful. A little beyond the town is a great steep mountain running down to the water, called, I think, Scot's Head; and then, having passed the south-west end of the island, we saw the coast trending eastward, and it formed one of the most

noble combinations of mountain, valley, and promontory that I had ever seen.

Martinique, our next stopping place, was in sight when we left Dominica, for forty-nine miles only divided the two islands. But I thought we should never get there, for the *Derwent* was so slow, that we got later and later at every place. This was a great nuisance to us, as it made our short time of staying still shorter. Martinique seen from a distance is a perfect cone, deeply furrowed with ravines, which seem to radiate from the summit. It has two peaks; the height of Mont Pelée is 4433 feet, of the Pitons 3960 feet, and up to these it seems to run very regularly from all sides. All these West Indian islands are of volcanic origin, and most of them are nothing more than extinct volcanoes: some, indeed, can hardly be called more than dormant, for they have had slight eruptions since they were discovered by Columbus.

It is curious to trace the original form of the islands, all the mountains and valleys generally taking their shape in uniformity with the main centre of eruption. Often, when near the island it is difficult to perceive this, but as you sail away, gradually each mountain and valley seems to fall into its proper position, and all point out where their great origin has been. In such islands as St. Eustatius it is easy enough; they

look like cones furrowed on all sides from the top, which is flattened, but in many large islands, such as Dominica and Guadaloupe, it is not so easy, and often there is more than one centre of eruption. The force of volcanic fire has raised these islands from the sea, but the power of water is continually at work to wear them down, and thus ravines and valleys are made, and at the mouth of them flat sloping plains. These plains have not often been formed in the West Indies, as the sea is usually deep, and has received and swallowed up all that has been carried down from the mountains. Thus, it seems almost possible to judge the age of the island—of course I mean comparatively speaking—by the amount of degradation it has undergone from water. Probably in ages long past the amount of rain that fell was greater than now, though this last autumn a tremendous hurricane, accompanied by a great fall of rain, passed over Guadaloupe and the adjacent islands, destroying an immense deal of property, and causing the loss of several lives. These sudden falls of rain happen occasionally in other countries ; for in Basil Hall's amusing account of Madeira, he tells us how even houses were carried down the great barrancas which run through the town of Funchal, and how on that occasion the torrent filled them to the brim. The Galipagos near the coast of Peru, form one of the

newest groups of volcanic islands. There is but little water, and their original cones are nearly perfect, but it does not appear to me that all valleys owe their origin entirely to water, though that is now the opinion of many competent observers. In the Sandwich island group, Hawaii is the largest island, and it consists chiefly of two volcanoes, Mouna Roa and Mouna Kea (the great crater of Kiruea being only a secondary crater to them). Now, if Mouna Kea, the height of which is about fourteen thousand feet, is seen as I saw it once from the distance of about twelve miles on the southern side, it appears to be a vast regular cone with numerous large cracks radiating from the centre down to the sea; and it is difficult to imagine anything but that they are cracks, and that the mountain has been lifted up from beneath and split by the operation. The slope of these mountains is very long and gradual, which is always the case when they are formed of successive layers of lava. Ashes make a tolerably steep cone, as at Vesuvius, but lava, as it is liquid, makes a very gradual slope. This shows that there were large eruptions, and that the streams of lava ran to the sea without cooling; small eruptions will make much steeper inclines, the streams cooling and running over each other, and then they may be of any steepness; indeed, I have in my possession a stalag-

mite of lava, which I got from out of a cave on one of the Sandwich islands, where the lava having dripped from the roof of the cave, every drop had nearly cooled before the next drop fell upon it, and so a little heap was produced.

On the southern side of Hawaii, that island lying in the influence of the north-east trade winds, there is but little rain, and the lava between Kailua and Kearakekua Bay looks quite fresh, black, and rugged, though that lava was thrown up before Cook discovered the islands, and there is hardly any water along that coast. Indeed, it now looks fresher than the lava that flowed a few years ago from Monte Rosso on Etna. On the north side of Hawaii, on the contrary, where there are frequent rains, there are deep cut valleys and beautiful streams of water rushing down each of them, and on passing along the north coast, you may, at one view, count ten or twelve cascades falling over into the sea. The cliffs are composed of layers of lava, with earth between each of them, the top covered with soil, and old forests growing on it. Now all this lava has been thrown up from an unfathomable sea, the earth of course having been formed afterwards, and the main craters are at the elevation of fourteen thousand feet above its level, so what can be the date of such an island as this? far beyond the age that Brydone calculates for Etna.

The island of West Maui, with a crater of twenty miles in circumference at a height of 10,000 feet above the sea, appears much more recent, and is therefore, like Teneriffe, much more porous ; and though when I was on the top I was caught by a heavy shower, brought by the north-east trade wind, yet there is hardly any water on the mountain. East Maui and Oahu are more broken up, and have large valleys and plenty of water, but at a distance the old volcanic slope can be traced. Tahiti seems older still; deeper valleys, more streams of water, and altogether the mountain is so shattered that it is difficult to see where the original crater was ; indeed, if the Crown mountain is viewed from any of the adjacent peaks, it looks as if it had all tumbled in together, and left only one wall, or part of a wall, of the original cone. A lake in the other part of the island, which is said to be a crater, might once have been so perhaps, but the lake now has been formed from the damming up of a stream by the fall of one of the mountains. But if Tahiti is viewed at some miles distance, all the valleys run regularly from a centre, just like those of the West Indian Islands. It is generally easy to decide whether these hollows are craters or not ; but often places are called craters where every distinctive mark is gone. Aden is said to be one, and may be so, but I could see no reason to think

it ; though near, in the Red Sea, there are some perfect cones of volcanoes, and we know that the whole district, particularly about the Dead Sea, is volcanic. The volcanoes of the Andes do not run their lava down in these long slopes, at least, none that I have seen ; for they have been forced up through more recent strata, and they are not composed, like the Sandwich Islands, of successive layers of lava, but of mountains of limestone and other late formations tilted up to an enormous height.

CHAPTER XII.

St. Pierre.—St. Lucia.—Barbadoes.—The Grenadines.—Georgetown.—St. Vincent.

At Martinique I did not go on shore, but Mrs. E. took advantage of a place in the mail officer's boat, and landed at St. Pierre, which is the chief town of the island. She was surprised at the goodness of the town, so unlike any other West Indian one we had seen. The houses are neither tumbling down nor propped up with stakes. The streets are well paved, with deep channels a foot deep and two feet wide, with a clear stream of water rushing through them. They are very narrow, with broad eaves to the houses, and consequently are very cool. There is a large French *café*, with tempting tables, and the town also boasts two fine fountains. One hardly knows why "they do these things better in France," but certainly it often is the case, and what we do well in England has not generally been imitated in our colonies.

Before Mrs. E. left the quay on her return to the steamer it was night, with the moon shining gloriously overhead. In the tropics you have no

twilight, therefore as soon as the sun goes down it is dark.

The next island was St. Lucia, distant only forty-five miles, and therefore we passed it in the night. We landed the mails at its chief town—Castries—but had left it a long time before daybreak. From St. Lucia, one hundred and eight miles took us to Barbadoes, but being rather late in starting from Castries we did not arrive at Bridgetown till 5 p.m. Barbadoes, or "Little England," as the "Bims" proudly call it, is a low, ugly island of limestone-looking formation, entirely planted and cultivated throughout with sugar canes. The houses and barracks are remarkably well built, the roads excellent, and the whole island highly civilised; but nothing picturesque or interesting is to be seen. The "Bims" are noted for being the most conceited people in the world, and pride themselves on being the most loyal, but one hardly knows in what their loyalty consists. They have a peculiar twang when speaking, which makes them conspicuous and at once known all over the West Indies. There were a great many ships in the harbour. We went on shore at once, and landed near the barracks, and were met by Major B., who took us to his house to see his wife, who had come out from England with us. After a visit of half an hour we were obliged to leave, without being able to go into the town or call upon the illustrious

Betsey Austin, if she still exists. The firing of the steamer's gun soon called us from shore, and our luggage having been transferred from the *Derwent* we went on board the *Wye*.

The *Wye* was a small screw steamer which was to take us on to Trinidad, and leave us there for two days whilst she took the rest of the mails and passengers on to Tobago. Another steamer branched off from here to Demerara, a distance of 392 miles. The *Wye* had such a bad character for rolling that the nautical world asserted that even the officers were sea-sick; but we found her very comfortable, and she was fast, and soon got over the ninety-five miles which divides Barbadoes from St. Vincent. We ran under a fine headland into a pretty bay, and anchored off the town, which rejoices in the name of Kingstown. Some well-built barracks were perched on the top of the headland, with an arched viaduct leading over a small ravine, and these buildings took the appearance of a fortress; all looked well at a distance, but I heard that the buildings were now empty, and the barracks useless, though they had cost an immense sum to build. The troops were not thought necessary, and so were withdrawn. The town is very prettily situated, and has nice houses in it, but appears to have as little life in it as the others.

St. Vincent is a high mountainous island, and

the scenery seemed very beautiful, but being only thirteen miles long and eight wide, it is not one of the largest. Like most of the other mountainous islands it is volcanic, and a few miles from the town is a soufrière, which still emits smoke and sulphurous vapour. It is a sight well worth seeing, and if I had had time I should have visited it, but horses were not to be easily got, indeed there are no ways of getting things quickly in these countries. St. Vincent is, I believe, the only island on which any of the aborigines exist.

Between St. Vincent and Grenada, a distance of eighty-four miles, we passed a number of small islands called the Grenadines. They were mostly steep and rocky, with very picturesque outlines, but we were hardly near enough to see much of them. For a long distance we ran near the shore of Grenada, and it seemed even more beautiful than any island we had seen. Thick forests clothed the sides of the mountains, and there appeared less cultivated land than in the other islands. Grenada is but little larger than St. Vincent, being eighteen miles long and eight wide, but it is high, St. Catherine's mountain rising three thousand two hundred feet above the sea. As we ran along the coast I amused myself by making a water-coloured sketch from the deck of the steamer, but I found it very difficult to do. All the woods were bright rich green, with blue

cobalt shadows, and the sea in front was of the deepest indigo. So, although the whole landscape was glowing under a tropical sun, the colouring was what is generally called cool. The fact is, when people want to give the idea of warmth, they put yellows, reds, and browns in their paintings, with a yellow sky, and a large red or dull coloured sun, whereas here the sky was a clear deep blue, with the sun like a very small white steel point in the middle of it, and everything, both on land and sea, was green and blue, and not a bit of warm colour in the whole landscape.

We arrived off Georgetown about half-past three. The town is built on the side of a hill, divided from the little land-locked harbour by a cape crowned with a fort, and, seen from the sea, it appeared in rather a worse plight than most of the towns which we had seen in the West Indies, and that is saying a great deal. Numbers of ruined houses, some of them large ones like warehouses, with all the windows out, made it look as if it had been lately devastated by a fire. The streets, which ran straight up the hill from the water, appeared almost empty. No shops, no one at their doors, and nothing going on. Several churches were conspicuous, but were remarkable only for their ridiculous architecture. They were a sort of imitation of English churches; one had a square tower with pinnacles at the top, but

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each had every fault that a builder could make them ugly with.

We steamed into the bay, a beautiful little sheltered harbour, surrounded by steep hills,—such a harbour as you sometimes find on the coast of Norway, but its likeness was in shape only, for though steep it was not so sterile and rocky as are the fjords on that coast. We went up close to the wharf, for the *Wye* was to stay here seven hours to coal, and numbers of black women were waiting at the coal-heaps ready to begin, for a great mountain of coal had been prepared, and they soon set to work. The coaling here, as at Jamaica, is all done by black women, each of whom carries a basket of coal on her head, walks up the plank, and puts it on board. Each basket holds 75 lbs., for five of which a woman gets one penny; and at the gangway sit two men, who count them up by tens, at each ten call "tally," and chalk down the number on a board.

We got on shore as soon as we could, to get out of the way of dust and noise, and called on some of the residents, to whom we had letters of introduction, but we found none of them at home. We then walked up the streets, which were so steep that no carriage could have ascended, and at the top of the hill sat down on a wall by the Roman Catholic church. It was very hot, the

thermometer being 88°, and we sat and looked about us, wondering at the miserable style of the town. All the houses seemed built in imitation of English, to stand the blasts of an English winter, with square windows, and roofs prepared for heavy falls of snow. No balconies or verandahs, or anything fitted for a tropical climate; they seemed to have been built in recollection of houses in country towns at home. As usual, we admired the trees, covered with fragrant flowers, and the humming-birds fluttering around them; and then we went up to the foot of the fort overlooking the harbour, and sat there until it got dark. While we were resting there, a gentleman introduced himself to us as a friend of Mr. S., to whom we had a letter of introduction, and we went with him to Mr. S.'s house, and ere long he returned and regaled us on some excellent shrub, —a liqueur for which Grenada is deservedly famous. I believe the last time I tasted this liquor was in my youthful days, at Surley Hall, where shrub and lemonade used to be a favourite drink,—but this shrub was something superior to anything I had ever tasted.

Mr. S.'s house looked on the wharf, and the scene now was a curious one. The coaling was going on with vigour, I might almost say with fury; rum had had its effect, and the black women were working away, shouting, swearing, singing,

screaming; the loaded ones toiled up the plank with the coals on their heads, whilst the others came down swinging their empty baskets in their hands. Coal fires were burning on the wharf and on the planks, in iron frames, like great cressets, and by the red lurid light the women appeared to the eye and ear like so many demons. A gang of Seedies coaling at Singapore is bad enough; but they are men and not women; and although they were niggers that makes a great deal of difference Two of our friends took Mrs. E. between them, and we got on board through the crowd easily enough. We went to our cabin at once, and before morning we had left the beautiful Grenada far behind us.

CHAPTER XIII.

Trinidad. — Bocas de Monos. — Port of Spain. — Lodging Houses.

Ninety miles took us to Trinidad, and in the morning we were in sight of the island, and steering straight for the first of the Bocas or mouths which open from the sea into the Gulf of Paria. To the north-east the coast consisted of high, steep promontories; and to the south, beyond the Bocas, the blue mountains of South America rose up in long succession. We entered the Boca de Monos, or Monkey's Mouth, a narrow but sufficiently safe entrance, though the current being strong makes it sometimes dangerous for sailing vessels. They generally enter at a wider passage, more to the south. There are several Bocas, divided from each other by small steep islands; but probably at one time these islands were all one, and Trinidad was a part of the great American continent. The similarity of the natural productions, birds, animals, everything in short, tends to this conclusion. The mountains on each side of Boca de Monas are very high, and

clothed with wood, and many of the trees were bright with blossoms. At the foot, for the mountains ran sheer down to the sea, the waves had hollowed out great black caves, and thundered into them with a sullen roar. It is a fine scene, but is generally overrated in the descriptions that I have read of it. Inside, the water was smooth, and surrounded by some lower mountains, and it looked exactly like a Scotch lake. Inside, too, we lost the breeze—the cool northern breeze which we had brought down with us all the way from St. Thomas's; the heat was intense, and it did not decrease all the way up to the town. From the shallowness of the water we anchored nearly a mile off Port of Spain (which is the chief town of the island), but the captain allowing us to land in his boat, we soon got on shore. I put Mrs. E. into a hack carriage, and getting our luggage on to a cart, I followed on foot to Miss Emma Clarke's hotel, which had been recommended to us (indeed, I had heard it was the only one); so there we went, and luckily found rooms.

The exterior of the house was laughable; it looked like—no, I never saw anything like it in England, so must try to describe it. The house stands detached from others, on a plot of rubbishing ground; it is two stories high, and was once plastered or washed yellow, but most of this is worn off. There are no chimneys, nor any glass

visible in the windows, for they were all set open. The house was set back about six feet from the street, and was divided from it by wooden palings, but these were half broken down and gone. Altogether there was a disreputable air about it which words fail me to depict. However, Miss Emma welcomed us, and we were glad to get anywhere, as the sun was now really hot. Miss Emma Clarke is a portly Mulatto, ready to do anything or get anything for us, for we found that, generally speaking, there was nothing in the house. But nobody cared much about this, and if they did get anything, appeared to think it a piece of good fortune. A young black fellow was cook, a boy about fourteen, without coat or shoes, waited on us, and one or two women thought they acted as housemaids, but did nothing. Miss Emma usually sat in the back door, for that was the coolest place, and it was convenient, for it commanded both the house and the kitchen, which was in a separate building, and from here she issued her orders. When we wanted anything, as of course there were no bells, we called to her out of the window. "Miss Emma." "What you want?" "I want my shoes cleaned." "Pitch 'em out, then, the boy will clean 'em." "Miss Emma, I want some ice and limes." "You must wait, then; boy gone to ice-house this half hour; I expect he stop to play in street; I cuff him when he come back."

Behind the house in the yard was the bath-house, and that was the best thing there. The bath, built of stone and cement, was about eight feet long and three deep, with a continual flow of clear cool water into it. It was worth anything, and I really do not know what we should have done without it. We found out afterwards there was a much nicer lodging-house kept by a Miss Georgy Shaw; in fact, throughout the West Indies the lodging-houses seemed all to be kept by "Misses." We only had two days to stay in Trinidad, then the *Wye* would come back from Tobago and take us away, and in expectation of that we left our luggage, arm chair, etc., on board. So I ordered a carriage, delivered some letters at the Government offices close by, then drove off to "the Cottage," to call on the Governor and Mrs. Manners Sutton.

The Cottage is about two miles from the town. It is a large one-storied bungalow, as it would be called in India, with broad verandahs all round it, and is situated at one end of the Botanical Gardens. The Cottage now acts as the Government house, the old one having been pulled down some years ago and never rebuilt. We were received with great kindness, and, as we wished to see the Botanical Gardens, the custodian was sent for, and he shewed us everything. Then we drove round the Savannah, as the public

park is called, back to the town; but, by the time our drive was finished, we were so much pleased with all we had seen, that we agreed to let the rolling *Wye* go back without us, and stay sixteen days in Trinidad. Having decided on this, we unpacked our things, made our rooms as comfortable as we could, wrote letters to go back by the steamer instead of ourselves, and returned in the evening to dine at "the Cottage."

Trinidad is a large island, second only in size to Jamaica. It is nearly square and very fertile, though the hilly parts are still covered with forest. Being only nine degrees from the equator, of course it is very hot; indeed, when we were there, being April, the sun was nearly vertical, and at noon we had no shadow, at least so little that when we stood up it was hardly perceptible on one side more than another. There is a great deal of rain in the wet season, which begins about May, and there are showers at all times, so it has a very verdant look compared with Jamaica.

Port of Spain is well built and clean, with broad, well-paved streets and good shops; the principal buildings are the government offices, which are well arranged and cool; a marble statue of Lord Harris, a former governor, and a good collection of stuffed birds, is all there is of interest in them. In the court house are some portraits worth seeing; amongst them one of Sir Ralph

Abercrombie, who was also governor here. Perhaps the building of most consequence in Port of Spain is the ice-house; it is a Yankee establishment; below is a large store—a kind of Fortnum and Mason's—where preserved meats and everything of that sort may be bought. Behind is the ice-store, and upstairs are rooms where luncheons and dinners may be had—a restaurant, in fact—and in it a large bar, which has a great deal of custom, though they do not drink as many strong drinks here as in the United States. I saw a black cab-driver come in one day, and asked him what he was drinking. "Soda and syrup, sare," he said with a grin. They draw a distinction in the West Indies in the size of drinks, and ask if you will have a long drink or a short one; a glass of beer, soda-water, and those sort of things coming under the first head, cock-tails, and that class, under the second. The Yankees in these countries (and other residents very much follow their example) generally drink cock-tails, and they are not bad, and I do not think them unwholesome in a hot climate. A cock-tail is, as I suppose every one knows, composed of brandy, gin, or whiskey, a very small quantity of bitters, some pounded ice and sugar, and a very little lime juice; this, when stirred up with a swizzle stick, which is made from the shoot of an orange tree, is a most en-

ticing drink. Bitters are excellent here, and the best are made at Angostura, a town on the Orinoco.

The ice-house is a monopoly, and is under a contract with Government always to have a supply ready, and they are fined £5 a day if they allow the stock to run out. Of course it comes from Wenham Lake, or Fresh Pond, as the Yankees call it. The ice-ship is looked for with great interest, as it brings other luxuries as well as ice: fresh codfish, veal, and all sorts of fresh provisions, which the West Indians think far superior to anything they can get in the island; but I think novelty and scarcity give them the chief charm.

Behind the town, in the outskirts, are the detached villas of the principal residents, and they generally stand in gardens of an acre or more. These are really nice houses, and the grounds are well laid out, and planted with all the beautiful trees belonging to the island, and with specimens from other tropical countries. Greenhouse plants that are small in England here form trees; Stephanotus ten feet high, Gardinias thirty feet high, and covered with blossoms. Some people have a fine collection of orchids, others of ferns; and each garden had something new to attract our attention.

Beyond these villas was the savannah,—a flat, open, grass park,—round the outside of which

was a drive. Inside was the racecourse, and in it was an immense edifice called "The Prince's Building;" for when Prince Alfred signified his intention of visiting Trinidad, there was no house in which to give any public entertainment, so the loyal inhabitants voted a large sum of money, and erected this great building to provide ball-rooms, banquetting-rooms, and everything that could be desired. It was a great pity, I thought, that they had not built it in such a way and in such a situation, that it would afterwards have answered the purpose for a Government-house, of which Trinidad is sadly in want. But it seems to have been done in a hurry, and unfortunately now it is of no great use; however, the people of Trinidad are very loyal, and will produce the money to build a Government House when it is wanted.

The Botanic Garden beyond this, just at the foot of the mountains, is very beautiful; indeed I have never seen its equal anywhere. It has so many advantages,—a hot climate, plenty of rain, a good supply of water from the mountains, an excellent gardener in charge of it, and a people who are proud of it and appreciate it, and it has had the additional advantage of having been well looked after and stocked for years. I cannot enumerate all the remarkable trees and plants, but you may say that here every tropical tree may be

seen flourishing. A great many different sorts of palms, cabbage, fan, date, royal, and numbers of others. An avenue of the barren and Indian fig, *Ficus redula*, and intertwined with them an enormous creeper, *Siccaradacca volubile*, forms a most striking combination; then Australian trees lift their white shining branches in the air. In other parts are groves of nutmegs,—trees of forty feet high, covered with their shining fruit. Coffee, tea, cloves, and other spices, in profusion, and dracænas and bananas waved their beautiful leaves in the breeze. Another part was laid out as a flower garden, with beds, and a splashing fountain in the midst; but the flowers grew rather too rank for a geometrical arrangement. In one corner I noticed that curious *Musa*, the traveller's tree, which I had seen in India, and which carries a supply of clear water at the foot of every stalk. In another, a bush was covered with that remarkable creeper, the *Aristolochia gigas*, a Brazilian plant. The pine family alone seemed to be unrepresented; but a few from the warmer parts of Mexico might be introduced. I think, too, that the Norfolk Island pine, *Araucaria excelsa*, might not find it too hot, for there is a fine specimen in the Botanic Gardens at Sydney, and that is a hot place.

Trinidad has one peculiarity,—it is never visited by hurricanes, and altogether it is very

THE BOTANIC GARDENS

healthy. The town stands low, nearly on a flat, and it is surrounded with moderately-sized hills, but, unlike every other place, they say that on the hills it is very unhealthy, and if you were to sleep one night on the hill above the town, you would probably have a fever; the cause is supposed to be from the malaria rising from the marshy ground beyond.

There are two chief churches in Port of Spain, —the Cathedral, which is Roman Catholic, and to which most of the old French residents go; and the other, the English Protestant Church. The latter, to which we went, is large, airy, and cool, and was well filled with the white population; but it struck me as being rather singular that no one joined either in the hymns or in the responses; everyone seemed shy and ill at ease. There were a few blacks present; the women dressed in their best, with gaudy handkerchiefs tied round their heads, something in the shape of a turban. The fashionable colour of these handkerchiefs is yellow, or rather orange, striped with red. They take the greatest pains to put it on in proper style, and that the colours should be of the brightest they have the handkerchief painted. The residents all dress in the same costume that they would in England,—cloth coats and waistcoats, with high black hats, and I believe I was the only person in the church in a white silk coat.

The next day, as the *Wye* returned from Tobago, I went on board before breakfast to get my luggage on shore,—which I easily did ; but we had left all our warm clothing packed up at St. Thomas's, and had ordered it to be put on board the *La Plata*, as we had intended to go home in that ship. Now, as our tour was prolonged, we should go home in the next transatlantic steamer, so it was necessary to stop our things from being put on board, or if already shipped, to get them back again. All these directions I had to entrust to the steward, who was ill in his cabin with fever, so I had some doubt whether we should find our things after all, but I promised some dollars if the things went right,—and they luckily did so. Mrs. E. had gone out riding to St. George's post, and described the view from there as being very beautiful ; she was particularly struck with one tree, called the *Bois Immortelle ;* the leaves of it were not out, but the tree was one mass of scarlet flowers, as bright and showy as our scarlet geranium. In the afternoon, I went to the Botanical Gardens, and finding a place shaded from the sun, which was at least cool-looking, made a drawing of some of the trees ; but I was surprised to find from the curator that one of the largest of them, and like a great spreading oak, was only forty years old, the seed having been brought there in the pocket of one of the former Governors.

CHAPTER XIV.

Expedition to some Islands near the Bocas.—Chaguaramos Bay.—Favourite Nigger Song.—Caves containing Stalactites.—Maraccas Bay.—The Cocoa, or Cacao.—A rocky stream frequented by Crabs.—Blue Basin.—Miss Emma Clarke's Hotel.—Luxuries of Port of Spain.

March 20th.—This day we had arranged with Mr. Devenish and his son to make an expedition to some islands near the Bocas, to dine, fish, bathe, and otherwise enjoy ourselves; so they having provided a basket of provisions at the ice-house, we went down to the pier, where the boat was waiting for us. Four blacks rowed us down to the end of Chaguaramos Bay, where Mr. D. was superintendent of works.

The bay is divided from another by a narrow flat isthmus, and a small canal, called Hart's Cut, had been dug through this neck of land, so that the fishing boats could pass through it at high water, and thus save a long and sometimes dangerous detour round the peninsula. There is a superintendent there now, with a gang of nigger convicts, digging stone to finish the mouth of the canal. We landed at his house, and arranged everything for breakfast, and then went and

bathed in a little retired bay, where the forest came down to the water's edge. After breakfast, we went to where the convicts were digging stone; they were pulling the blocks out of the hillside with a rope, one man extemporising a song, and all joining in chorus. This style of work seemed to suit them well, particularly as they only gave one pull at the rope to each verse. They gave us all the noise, but not much of the poetry of the nigger melodies, indeed, but few of these songs have ever been known amongst these blacks. The favourite song here was,—

"John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave;"

but though I myself knew, I never found a black who could tell me exactly who John Brown was, or what he did. The style of these fellows' songs was about this :—

"William Riley was a bad man;
(*Chorus*) Oh, William Riley!
William Riley came to me;
Oh, William Riley!
William Riley stole my daughter;
Oh, William Riley!
He killed his brother James;
Hurrah, for James Riley!

and so on. The work on which they were employed seemed hard enough, but they do not mind the heat; and although they had "Felon" stamped on their clothes in large letters, they

CHAGUARAMOS BAY

appeared very cheerful, and delighted to see us. One grinning fellow installed himself as head waiter, unpacked everything, and waited on us capitally; but afterwards, whilst I was engaged drawing, and the rest had gone to see some caves near, they fraternised with our boatmen, finished our brandy and sherry, and we were only just in time to save the last bottle of claret we had.

The caves were situated on a small island, and when it is low tide (which it was when our party were there) you can walk for several yards inside them. The ground is very uneven, and you look down a kind of abyss, which was always full of water. Mr. Devenish burnt some blue lights, and the effect was beautiful in the extreme, lighting up the whole caves, and showing off to perfection its numerous stalactites which hung from the roof.

Chaguaramos was a very pretty place, with fishermen's huts, and tall cocoa-nut trees, on the water's edge; and we stayed here till the sea breeze was over, and started on our homeward voyage soon after dark, cocoa-nut trees, huts, and stars being reflected in the sea as in a mirror. It was a long, slow row home, for there was no wind to help us, and we did not arrive at the pier till ten P.M.

Our kind friends, Mr. Warner and Mr. Devenish, had organised another expedition for us to a place

called Maraccas Bay, on the other side of the island. Mr. W., the Attorney-General, undertook the commissariat department, and well did he carry it out. We first drove out a short distance along the road to Arima, and then turning up a a pretty valley, through which runs a clear stream, we went to the police-station, to which place all our eatables had been already sent; we had had chocolate at daybreak, and now our table was placed under the trees, and we had an excellent breakfast. Then we all mounted our horses, and rode for some distance through thick plantations of cocoa. The whole valley was full of cocoa-groves, and as the trees do better when partly shaded by others, it had the appearance of a continual wood. This tree, *Theobroma cacao*, of course has nothing to do with the cocoa-nut palm on which the well-known nuts grow, but being called *Cacao* in Spanish, it has made rather a confusion of names. "Chocolate" is a Mexican word. The *Bois Immortelle*—which, as I have before mentioned, has a beautiful red flower—is the tree generally planted to shade the cocoa groves, and is therefore called *La Madre del cacao* in Spanish. It is supposed to collect the dews and moisture in the driest weather, and protects the cocoa-tree from the too great heat of the sun.

The cocoa, or cacao, is like a large hazelbush, but

rather thicker in the trunk, of which there are generally several. The leaf is something like that of a sweet chestnut, only larger. The fruit is a great thick pod eight or nine inches long, and it grows not on the sprays, like other fruit, but hangs from a little stem, perhaps an inch long, which springs from the side of the trunk or one of the larger branches. The flower is excessively small, something like a little thin daisy, so is almost invisible on the side of the trunk. The pods vary in colour from a deep crimson to scarlet and orange, so a heap, when gathered, has a very pretty appearance. Each pod contains twenty or thirty nuts, like almonds. The nuts, after being taken from the pods, are crushed, then made into a paste, and finally formed into sticks by the negro women. This then is cocoa, and when ground makes a very good drink.

Chocolate, however, is better, though it is actually the same material; but it is sent to France, where it is mixed with sugar and vanilla and sent back to Trinidad; and it will hardly be believed that cocoa, costing from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per pound, is sent back as chocolate, and sold in the shops here at 5*s.* per pound, though the sugar and vanilla with which it is mixed are both sent from Trinidad. All the white sugar is made in England, and pays a high duty to come back to its original country. Cocoa-nibs are the entire kernels

broken up together, and they really are quite as good as any other part; they are also the most pure, as they cannot be adulterated.

Having passed through these cocoa-groves, we ascended the side of the mountain, our road leading through the primæval forest. This was very beautiful; great-leaved plants and ferns crowding up the side of the path, and all round being a thick mass of vegetation. From near the summit of the hill was a beautiful view of the coast and bay to which we were bound, and the descent through the forest was yet more beautiful. The trees were not very large, but were tall, with straight clean stems; and though creepers and orchids hung around, it was not the same impenetrable bush as that on the Panama railway. At the foot of the hill was a small deep stream, which gave us some trouble to cross, but a Spanish settler came from his house close by and helped us, and showed us a fallen tree we could walk over, and drove our horses through a little way below.

Near here was a tree covered with ripe guavas, they smelt good, and had rather a nice taste; but most of the fruit was full of maggots, which is said to be always the case when they are ripe. At last we all got down to the seashore, and Mr. D. producing some sandwiches and a bottle of champagne from his saddlebags, we had a slight

luncheon, and found the champagne most refreshing. Then making the Spaniard take care of all the horses, we divided into parties, and went to bathe in the sea. The surf rolled in quietly but strongly; and although we were not quite free from fear of sharks, we enjoyed a delicious bath.

Maraccas Bay is a small deep bay, running in among high wooded hills, excessively pretty, and as the shore is fine sand, it is well adapted for bathing. The famous Maraccas waterfall is precipitated from a great height the other side of the range of hills that we crossed. It is but a small stream in general, but in the rainy season, I dare say, it is a fine sight.

We mounted our horses, and returned by the Spanish settler's house, in front of which we gathered some small bottle-gourds from a tree. They were about six inches long, and, with a cork at the end, make excellent shot-pouches. These gourds, or calabashes, grow on a large tree, and are of many different sizes. The inside, which is soft, is scooped out; the large ones are used as basons, tubs, and cooking utensils, and the smaller ones are cut and stained, and made into very pretty baskets of different shapes by the natives; others have necks, and are formed into bottles, and in fact, nearly every utensil that the natives require is made from a gourd.

We then began our ascent of the hills, and the path through the wood was so beautiful that I could not resist making a sketch ; but I had hardly done a pencil outline, when some big drops of rain began to fall. It increased, and soon poured in torrents. We went on, under the dripping trees, at a foot's pace, and though we had umbrellas, we were wet through before we reached the summit, and then the descent was worse ; for the path, being clay, became so slippery that the horses could hardly stand, and we expected every instant to tumble headlong among the bushes. However, we plodded on, and as we got lower down the rain began to decrease, and soon ceased altogether. As we crossed a little rocky stream, Mr. D. amused us much by jumping off his horse and running after some crabs, which were trying to hide themselves under the stones. After a chase, he caught several, and we had them cooked for dinner, but they had little or no meat upon them ; but inside they were full of fully-formed young ones. Do these crabs, then, bring forth their young alive or spawn ? I forgot to ask ; but they evidently came up the rocky stream to breed. Arrived at the police-station, we took off our wet clothes, dressed as well as we could in the cloaks and coats we had left there, and then had an excellent dinner. We drove home to Port of Spain in the evening, and luckily took no harm from our wetting.

Trinidad, like Jamaica, might be called "the island of beautiful streams," and one of the most beautiful of them runs down a valley not far from Port of Spain, and the most striking part of it is, where it falls into a deep pool called the "Blue Basin." It is a spot that everyone ought to visit, and it is a favourite place for picnics. The Governor and his family were kind enough to make a party for us, and having breakfasted at "The Cottage," we drove off in two carriages to the valley,—luncheon, ice, and everything having been prepared; horses, also, were sent on, as we could not drive within a mile of the basin, and the hill was rather steep. We drove as far as we could in the carriages, and then most of the party mounted their horses, and rode till the path became too steep and rough; we then dismounted, leaving the horses with the grooms, and proceeded on foot through the shady cocoa-groves. The valley became narrower and the sides steeper as we followed the course of the clear brook. Then turning a corner in the wood, we suddenly came upon the most lovely amphitheatre in the world. A small stream, rushing from the woods, fell about fifty feet into a large deep basin of blue water, throwing its spray into the air; all around were great leaved tropical plants, wild bananas, and ferns, in the thickest masses. Above towered lofty trees, nearly closing over head, and only allowing a few

spokes of bright light to enter, and to touch the green leaves with still brighter green. Although green, everything had a blue tinge over it, and it all looked like some gorgeous scene in a ballet, the illusion being heightened by the ladies of the party, who wore white muslin dresses and broad hats. We sketched, gathered ferns, and amused ourselves in different ways, and then returned to where the carriages were left, where the servants had prepared an excellent luncheon, with ice, beer, and every sort of luxury, and spread it under the shade of some tall feathery bamboos. Here we gathered oranges from the trees close by, and gave the owners 6d. for about fifty, with which they seemed quite satisfied. Then the Governor, Mrs. E., and the ladies who had riding-horses, rode up to the north post, from which was a fine view of the seacoast, outside the Bocas. I and the rest went to a sugar-mill, and stayed there till the party returned, when we went home thoroughly delighted with our day's excursion. We dined at "The Cottage," and having before ordered a hack carriage to come for us to take us home, we started for the town soon after ten o'clock. The black driver, who had a friend on the box, went through the garden, and passed the sentry at a foot's pace, but when he got into the road, he still went on at the same slow rate. I called to him, and asked why he went so slow,

THE BLUE BASIN

and asked if there was anything the matter with the horse, "No, sare; horse all right." "Then why don't you go faster?" "Horse all right, sare, but wheel bad." I kept urging that he must go a little faster; but, "No," he said; "you make yourself comfortable, and I'll get you home." "Of course you will," I said; "but why did you bring such a carriage?" He answered, "I would not have come at all, but I promised you, and so I would not leave you there all night." And so we went on at a very slow walk, the wheel every time it turned, giving a series of uncomfortable jerks. But in time, as he promised, he brought us to the town; he went through the streets even more carefully, but as we passed the street running down to the harbour, I saw that the Southern Cross had got already a little beyond its perpendicular position, showing that it was past midnight. Miss Emma was waiting for us at the door, so I took the candle to look at the ailing wheel. The tire and felloe were gone from one side, and we had come home on half a wheel, and on the points of the rest of the spokes. This accounted for the odd jerking we had experienced. I paid him his fare, for I was only thankful we got home at all, and we could not have got another carriage; indeed, there is often the greatest difficulty in getting hack carriages. A dollar, and a dollar and a half, is often asked

for bringing you home from dinner, from houses in the town.

All this time we stayed at Miss Emma Clarke's ; but our friends were so kind to us and so hospitable, that we did not often dine there, and the dinners of the residents were replete with every luxury,—good cooking, good wines well iced, and everything done in the best style ; not so were those, when we dined at home ; though Miss Emma tried her best to make us comfortable, and get us everything she thought we should like.

People in England, who get an eatable dinner every day without aspiring to a good one, do not generally trouble much about cooking ; but those who travel in foreign parts, and change often from one country and one climate to another, must and do think about it ; and whether they get a dinner at all, and what sort of one it is or is likely to be, becomes an important item in the day's work. Now, as far as my experience goes, the West Indies, for its pretensions, is about the worst country in the world for good living ; and although many West Indian dishes and West Indian cooks have some reputation, it is only amongst those who are perfectly ignorant of what a good dinner is. In the first place, the system, and what they try for, leads them into the grossest errors,—for West Indian cooking, like that of Van Diemen's Land and Australia, usually consists of a bad imi-

tation of the worst style of an English cuisine; and as the people, in addition to their ignorance, are most prejudiced, and their prejudice runs in favour of the country from which they came, they consider the best things are all those that come from England; and so if they wish to send up a good dinner, they give one tasteless salmon, preserved in tins, codfish sent out in ice, preserved oysters, veal from America (if an ice-ship has lately come in), and the only West Indian dish, which is really to be eulogised, is the inevitable turtle soup. Now, as we have the best of all sorts of meat in England, a plain dinner, done by a plain cook, is not a bad thing; but here, where the meats are of the worst quality, and they are unable to roast for want of a fire, and therefore bake everything, and generally bake it to rags,—the result may easily be imagined.

Some native animals are very good; but wild pigeons and wild ducks, baked twice as long as they ought to be, are but a woful parody of what we get in England. There are some very good fish, too,—the bagh of Trinidad, and the snapper and grouper, are excellent fish; but if they are fried, they are fried in infamous butter, or if boiled, they are smothered with the same, or covered with a tremendously hot-peppered sauce. Another, called the cascaduro,—a brown-looking fish, something like a small burbot,—is said to be

so good that if you eat it once, you will be certain to return to Trinidad to eat it again. The poultry is woful,—something like German chickens, but much more stringy ; and the beef is tougher than anyone can imagine. The fowls can be imitated by making a *fricassée* of knotted skeins of worsted ; the beef, by taking the coarse part of an old cow and larding it with fiddle-strings. Turtle is plentiful, and, at Port of Spain, is eaten twice a week, Wednesday and Friday, on account of the number of Roman Catholics in the island. It was sold at about threepence the pound. Land-crabs are considered great luxuries, but we did not appreciate them ; the curried prawns were excellent. Another dish was peculiar to Trinidad, —grubs from the grugru-palm ; they were stuck on a stick and fried, and eaten off the stick, and were said to be excellent. I ordered them, but never got any, Miss Emma saying she would rather starve than eat such nasty stuff ; but, however, we got good bread and delicious chocolate, which made up for many other deficiencies.

CHAPTER XV.

Visit to the Pitch Lake.—The Lapp of Trinidad.—The Vanilla Plant.—Steamboat Excursion.

On Friday, April 1, we agreed to go and see another great lion of Trinidad ; viz., the Pitch Lake, and, as several other gentlemen were going too, we made a large party. The steamer which trades along the coast, sailed at seven A.M., and stopped at a place called La Brea, five or six hours from Port of Spain, and there we were to land, as the Pitch Lake was only a mile distant from it. We touched at several places on the coast, and landed and took in passengers ; but the country looked flat and uninteresting. At last we arrived at La Brea, and landed. We had heard that horses had been ordered for us, but there had been some mistake, and there were only horses for some gentlemen, who were going to see, and buy, I believe, a neighbouring estate. However, some one lent a horse to Mrs. E., and we all started off together, some riding and others walking, and we soon had enough of pitch. We landed at La Brea on pitch, the road was pitch, and everything was pitch. An asphalt petroleum sort of atmosphere

pervaded everything, and the dust smelt and tasted of pitch. We soon came to the lake and walked on it. It is a most curious place,—a slight depression in a flattish country, is filled with the blackest pitch. It is level, but has numerous cracks all about it, two or three feet wide; they were all filled with clear water, and appeared three or four feet deep; but I hardly know what caused them, nor why they did not fill up. The surface was soft from the heat of the sun, and the pitch felt so hot we could hardly bear our hands upon it; and the niggers who carried my sketch book and the luncheon basket, said that the water in the crevasses was too hot for their bare feet. It was perfectly safe to ride about the lake (though I heard that animals had been engulfed in it), but immediately the horse stood still his hoofs began to sink, and indeed our heels began to sink unless we kept moving. The depth of the pitch is not known; they said it was estimated to be about thirty feet, but it is not possible to fathom it, and if a hole is dug it soon fills up again. One of the gentlemen who had met us at La Brea, was engaged there as an agent for shipping pitch to England. His name was Perkins, and he showed and explained to us everything, and he and Mr. Devenish and some others who had not gone to the estate walked about the lake with us. It is surrounded with trees, so we sat under the shade of one and

had some wine and water, while I made a sketch. After that we crossed to the other side, the gentlemen helping Mrs. E. over the crevasses. And then we cut numerous specimens of the pitch from the surface of the lake with our knives, to take home with us.

Leaving the lake, we entered a forest full of palm-trees, where, amongst other curiosities, Mrs. E. saw a great blue and yellow macaw, and here the ground in the open glades was full of sensitive plant. The path led us down to the sea-shore, on which had been built a retort for distilling pitch into oil ; but we had seen enough of pitch, so returned homeward. The tide was in, and we had a most troublesome walk along rocks, the horse going easier on the sand, a little way into the sea, and at last we arrived safely at La Brea, very hot, thirsty, and tired. We went to Mr. Perkins's house, and nothing could exceed his kindness and hospitality. Like the rest of La Brea, his house was nothing more than a native cottage, but was fitted up comfortably, and he had prepared an excellent dinner for us—fish, wild pigeons, and a large part of a lapp, a wild animal found in the woods here. It is, I think, the same animal that is called "paca" in Brazil, and is about the size of a young fawn, which it also somewhat resembles in colour, but has shorter legs. The head is more like that of a guinea pig. It is excellent eating, and we all

did justice to it. Oranges and pine-apples formed our dessert, and for the latter La Brea is famous. They are said to be the best known, though I do not think they are superior, if equal, to the pines of Guayaquil. Mr. Perkins gave us a very large one to take home with us.

There was a grand dispute waging here, between the agents of the company, of which Mr. Perkins was manager, and a German, who was agent to Lord Dundonald. The latter had formerly bought a good deal of the land about here, and owned some of the Pitch Lake; but he claimed the monopoly of shipping pitch at La Brea, which the others disputed, and a wordy war rose high; but Mr. P. had a boat brought up, and he and several of his men loaded it, defying the others to stop them by legal measures. After numerous threats of law on both sides, they calmed down without fighting, and La Brea soon resumed its wonted quiet.

Mrs. E., walking round the village, bought a lot of pods of the vanilla, which grows on a creeping plant in the interior of the forest, and is difficult to get even here. They cost about one dollar a pound, but a pound goes a long way in cooking. It would answer well, I think, to grow this bean for profit; but so many animals and birds are fond of it, that it is very difficult to preserve it when ripe. I too bought some wild pigeons that

some shooters had brought in, and several others did the same; but when we arrived at Port of Spain, I do not think half of them were forthcoming, they were lost, stolen, or strayed.

The steamer that was to take us back, at last hove in sight, and we prepared to go on board. There were two boats, but the passengers were so numerous that we weighed them down to the water's edge. No one seemed to care, though I saw how dangerous it was when we pushed off; but when we met the swell, wave after wave washed us, half filling the boats, and wetting our legs thoroughly. Luckily, this lasted but a few minutes, for we presently scrambled up the side of the steamer; but it was a great nuisance having to go back to Port of Spain in wet clothes. The steamer was very slow, and most people thought it a lucky accident that the machinery did not break down, as that was often the case; but we plodded on, and arrived at the quay in safety, and got to our hotel at midnight, having left it in the morning at about half-past six. It was a good long day's work; but, luckily, we were none the worse for it afterwards, though I do not advise anyone to play these tricks with their health in tropical climates.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Maraval Valley.—The Bombax, or Silk-Cotton-tree.—Visit to St. Joseph.—Sugar Crops.—Start for the Homeward Voyage.

April 3.—We started early this morning with Mr. Warner, and rode up the Maraval Valley to "The Saddle", a notch in the mountains, through which a horse-path leads down to the coast. The valley had a beautiful clear brook running down it, and above, it is dammed up in large square tanks, from which tanks is derived one of the principal supplies for Port of Spain. It appeared beautifully clear water, and, surrounded by tall trees and feathery bamboos, looked cool and inviting for a bathe. We were to meet a gentleman near the Saddle, who was to take us on to show us his cocoa estate, but we had come slowly; and, as Mr. W. had an appointment in town at eleven, we were obliged to turn back without visiting it. Our friend, however, was at the rendezvous, and rode with us to the Saddle, which is a cutting in the rocks, by which a long ascent of the hill is saved. We then returned, the valley, though very pretty, having nothing of particular interest in it, except a very large

tree by the road side, one of the largest we had seen. It was, I think, a bombax or silk-cotton tree, with a tall straight trunk, all festooned and hung about with creepers, and at the top the large branches were covered with orchids and parasitical plants, growing as thickly as they could stand. Several long creepers, called here monkey ropes, hung from the highest boughs half-way to the ground. I returned to the place the next day and made a sketch of it.

Another day, having nothing to do, we hired a carriage and drove out with Mr. D. to St. Joseph, on the road to Arima. It was tremendously hot, but we had a good carriage with a cover to it. We stopped at St. Joseph, and went up a hill to a small chapel and Calvary, from which was a very extensive view over the surrounding country. Behind were the Maracas Mountains, but in front was a flattish plain, fertile in sugar, and the tall chimneys of the steam-engines on the sugar estates were dotted about pretty thickly. From here we drove on to another village, where we bought some large grass baskets, which the natives use for carrying their clothes in. They were very nicely woven with a double case of grass, with leaves between, which makes them nearly impervious to water. At the back of the house was a tame lapp in a cage, the only one we had seen.

Then we drove to one of the large sugar-estates, with the owner of which Mr. D. was acquainted.

It was in full work; the crushing-mill turned by steam-power. There were several Lascars employed here, and one that was feeding the mill quarrelled with another most desperately, and at last flew at him and seized him; but a big negro pushed in between them and walked them apart with the greatest air of superiority, hardly deigning to speak to them as he sent them back to their work. There are many Lascar settlers here, and they seem to do pretty well; there are also some Chinese, but they soon get gardens, and grow vegetables for the market, or keep grog-shops, which suits them better, and they make money at whatever occupation they turn their hands to. Having rested some time in the manager's house, and picked a quantity of ripe oranges off the trees, we returned to our carriage and drove home.

It was, I believe, a pretty good sugar year; the crops seem entirely to depend upon the rain, but during the harvest of it,—or crop-time as it is called, rain is very troublesome, as it makes the soft ground heavy when they want to cart the the canes home, and it prevents them drying the trash, or squeezed-out cane, with which they feed the fires. Whether a good system of agriculture is carried on, I know not; but I cannot help thinking it would be better if they were sometimes to change the crops. These estates have grown sugar on the same ground for twenty or thirty

years, or more, without any change ; and cutting such a large succulent mass as a sugar-crop, and burning the stalks and refuse, must, no doubt, be very exhausting for the land.

At last we had stayed our time at Trinidad, and I think I never spent a pleasanter sixteen days ; but still we could not prolong our visit, so on Saturday, the 8th of April, we sailed in the *Derwent* on our homeward voyage. It was a pouring wet morning ; but several of our friends came to see us off, and everything being gloomy (so different to the weather when we arrived), we felt that it was time to be gone, for we feared it was the beginning of the rainy season. Getting away from the South American coast, the sky soon brightened, though we had frequent showers, but the sun being nearly over head, it was very hot. We touched at all the islands again, and at Barbadoes changed from the *Derwent* to the *Conway;* but taking in passengers from each port, all going home, we soon became inconveniently crowded. At Barbadoes Mrs. E. bought a large stock of arrow-root, bird-peppers, cayenne, and guavas, etc., the best arrow-root being four pence the pound.

Then we steamed on to St. Thomas's, and were transferred at once to the huge Transatlantic ship, the *Seine*, 3400 tons burden, sister ship to the *Shannon*, in which ship we had come out.

We had now visited all the West Indian Islands (rather superficially, perhaps), excepting Cuba and Porto Rico. Cuba we had much wished to see; and had intended to go to Havana by an American steamer from Panama, but they do not now touch there. The only other way was to return to St. Thomas's, and start afresh for Havana by the regular mail line; but this would have been a long voyage, and would have made us so late home, that we would not attempt it. At Panama, we met Mr. and Mrs. C. Kean, who were also anxious to go to Havana, *en route* for New York; and when we were at Kingston, we tried to charter a steamer with them, but there were many difficulties in the way. We should then have been landed at Santiago de Cuba, on the south coast, and have a long, hot journey to the capital. There was a railway, we knew, part of the way, but it was very difficult to get any certain information on the subject; for although Cuba is almost in sight from Jamaica, there is but very little intercourse between the two islands. Schooners run occasionally, and they may be hired; but in these seas, if once out of the influence of the trade-winds, calms are so common that it might have been a very long and tedious voyage. So we reluctantly gave up Cuba, and made the voyage to Trinidad instead.

CHAPTER XVII.

Return to England.—The Seine.—Dietary Arrangements. —Return Tickets. — Provender of Sea-going Ships. —Result of the trip.—Log of the *Seine*.

The *Seine* was excessively crowded; there were about four hundred passengers, and the ship's company made up about another hundred. Of the passengers, fifty at least were ladies, and fifty children, with one stewardess to wait upon them, and there was no slight noise. One death happened on board. A foreigner, from Hayti, came on board ill, at St. Thomas's, and died in his cabin. He was buried at night quietly, and but few of the passengers knew anything about it, but we had some idea that he died of yellow fever. Capt. Rivett, the Commander, was Commodore of the Royal Mail Steamship Company's fleet, a most excellent and careful man. He was particularly anxious about fire, and took every precaution in his power against it; yet two or three voyages later, having left St. Thomas's about twelve hours, he discovered that the *Seine* was on fire in the forward hold. The cargo then consisted of cigars and

mackintosh goods, and it is supposed that these latter had taken fire spontaneously. The smoke and fumes from the burning cargo were dreadful, so that the men could not get down to the seat of the fire, and several who attempted it, were dragged out insensible. The *Seine* was built in compartments, and the crew were able to restrict the fire to the one in which it first broke out, whilst they steamed back to St. Thomas's. They entered the harbour and made fast to the buoy, then getting assistance from the other ships, the fire was soon put out; but Capt. Rivett told me that before he got back, he could see that the outside of the ship was red hot. Little damage was done to the *Seine*, but £40,000 worth of cigars were destroyed by this accident.

As there were so many passengers, there was not room in the saloon for us all at once, so there were two breakfasts, at 8 and 9·30, and two dinners, at 4 and 6 o'clock. Dinners *à la Russe* have been introduced on board most of the ships. This is not a bad plan for a steamer if well carried out, and the cooking be good; but if the *entrées* are liver and bacon and pork chops, as was often the case here, it can hardly be considered to be an imitation of a French dinner. Of course it was a considerable task to provision so many people, and was not like a man-of-war, where salt beef and pease-soup are the principal stores; but

here everyone wanted fresh meat two or three times a day. So there was a regular butcher's shop on board, with two butchers ; and five sheep, or two sheep, a bullock, or a pig, were killed every day ; also, sixty fowls, besides ducks, turkeys and geese. To supply this, the outward-bound ships each carried out a small flock of Hampshire Downs, and very good mutton they were ; but the beef, on the homeward voyage, was from Porto Rico, and was poor stuff. The Company was once famous for its provender ; but now they economise to the last halfpenny, and it is done mostly in the feeding of the passengers. The poor foreigners suffer much. One Frenchman complained bitterly : "I would not blame if they made me pay double for de claret wort one shilling, but it is not wort one sixpence." However, there was excellent water on board, distilled by the "Normandie" system from seawater.

On account of the number of passengers, we were put in a fore-cabin, so we had to pass the engine, galley, and butcher's shop to get to it. We had taken return tickets from England, and as transatlantic passengers have all advantages given to them, we thought we were all right. But at St. Thomas's, to our surprise, they told us that everyone had precedence over those with return-tickets. I think this must be considered rather a curious rule ; but I suppose if you have a

return ticket, the Company think that they have you safe, to bring you back when they choose. Really, I believe if it had not been for the kindness of Capt. Rivett, we should not have got a cabin at all. As I had paid in London for an after-cabin the whole distance out and back, and £15 extra for an outside one, I applied to have the extra money returned, according to the Company's printed rules; but they said "No; that because we had not *four* people put into our cabin, they would not refund us anything." So in future, I think they might as well scratch this rule out of their prospectus.

However, "All's well that ends well;" and it was a great satisfaction to me to remember that Mrs. E., who had had a cough for three years, had now so completely lost it, that she had not coughed since we passed the Azores in our outward voyage. We had been before to the United States in the *Great Eastern*, besides other shorter voyages, so she was a pretty good sailor; and I, having been a good deal in tropical seas, had always fancied that they would be the very best place for anyone with delicate lungs, and now I was glad to find that the voyage had answered my most sanguine expectations.

We landed at Southampton on the morning of April 28th, and so finished a very pleasant tour

of three months and a half; and, what was better, found very warm weather when we got home again.*

* I here give the Log of the *Seine* :—

			Miles.				Miles.
April	14	.....	170	April	21	.....	272
,,	15	.....	218	,,	22	.....	270
,,	16	.....	231	,,	23	.....	272
,,	17	.....	262	,,	24	.....	252
,,	18	.....	261	,,	25	.....	246
,,	19	.....	238	,,	26	.....	258
,,	20	.....	250	,,	27	.....	264

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